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RURAL
SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The Century Rural Life Books

C. J. GALPIN, *Editor*

RURAL SOCIAL PROBLEMS
CHARLES JOSIAH GALPIN

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MARY MEEK ATKESON

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RURAL SOCIAL PROBLEMS

BY

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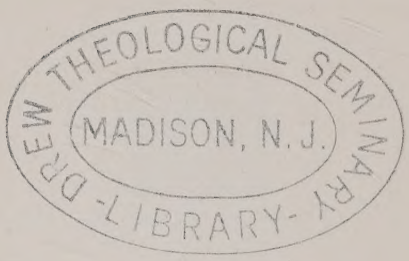

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To My Friend

DR. HENRY C. TAYLOR

Who, Standing in the Midst of Farm Life, Took Up
the Study of the Farmer's Economic Problem
Because He Felt That the American Farmer Is
Entitled to an American Standard of Living

This Book is Dedicated

142907

PREFACE

The human element in the problem of agriculture and country life is the theme of this book. Up to the present time rural humanism has been outgeneraled by the forces of rural finance, which keep promising that all the good things of life will come of their own accord to rural society, if only everybody will turn in and make agriculture a paying business. The hour is coming, however, when the humanizing forces inherent in agriculture and country life will break the leash and strike out to find the way to modernized living; for they are now pretty well aware that agriculture will never be prosperous enough out of its own coffers, however well filled they may be, to guide farm men, women, and children to goals of life which require ideals of living to comprehend.

This volume is written in anticipation of that hour of a courageous rural humanism. It is intended as a forebook to the Century Rural Life Books. Each chapter is viewed as an opening discussion of a topic, to be followed closely by a forthcoming book that will treat the subject of the chapter with scope.

CHARLES JOSIAH GALPIN.

January 1, 1924.

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RURAL SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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CHAPTER I

THE FRONTIER IN FARM LIFE

AMERICAN agriculture and farm life are young, very young as races and nations reckon age. And this youthfulness, if overlooked, will prove a constant source of perplexity if not of error to him who, with something more than a passing glance, would understand farm life and its problems in America. Let us frankly recognize, therefore, at the very start that America's three hundred years, England's fifteen hundred years, China's thousands of years, create differences in their types of farm life which appear as conspicuous as the dissimilarities between the child, the man, and the patriarch.

The Moving Line of Frontiers (1790–1880 A. D.)

The childhood, so to speak, of America's farming and farm life has been peculiarly like the childhood of children because it has been so eager, hopeful, spontaneous, and unrestrained. Commencing at the edge of the eastern wilderness and continuing westward over new lands

of wonderful fertility, lands virtually free to the individual farmer who turned the first furrow, American farming has been carried forward by persons and classes of persons who lived and worked under the spell of a powerful emotion. This emotion was the sense or experience of a new freedom, exemption from customary European restraint, the hitherto unknown feel of great spaces, altogether an almost boundless and unbelievable autonomy. To understand the inner character of the present American farm community, one must let his imagination take the journey across the American continent, and follow step by step this three hundred years of rural life and labor. A volume of the United States Census on Population for 1880 contains maps which show the successive waves of advance of population across the American continent east to west, from 1790 to 1880. In these maps the line running from north to south marking the western edge of areas containing, on the average, county by county, as many as two persons to the square mile—a line very irregular, indeed, as may well be imagined—is proposed as the American frontier line.

This frontier line crept westward day by day, a few feet a day; slow like a glacier, but like a glacier ever moving on. During the first two hundred years the frontier line moved from the Atlantic coast across the Appalachians; during the next fifty years, half-way across the Mississippi Valley; the last fifty years have witnessed the steady movement of the frontier line clean across the Mississippi Valley, over the Rockies, and to the Pacific coast.

On this ever-moving frontier line were the forerunners of American civilization. Here the farm family faced the wilderness and the prairie and subdued them with ox and plow. Along with the farmer stood the hunter, trader and town builder, miner, lumberman, boatman, highway builder, overland carrier. As the frontier line moved on, a second line occupied the position left and began to establish and intrench more perfectly the institutions of civilization. A third line followed the second, and so on until civilization itself may be said to have moved across the continent and taken up its fixed positions.

The American historian has pointed out that democracy, all through its history on the American continent even up to the present time, has been characterized by the presence of this frontier line of adventurous souls engaged in subduing an ever new and changing type of land, landscape, and resources. He has stressed the fact that a back-flow of youthful spirit, virility, hope, imagination, confidence, power, has continually poured eastward from this ever new and spontaneous frontier, into the older States; and so he claims that American democracy has grown up under a process of inoculation with the serum of youth. America thus has kept rejuvenated and revitalized in contrast with European democracy.

Well may the students of rural life thank the historian for this historical point of view; for now rural thinkers will note with more particularity what the frontier has meant in the growth of the farm community and rural institutions.

The Rates of Development of Agricultural and Urban Land

In the three-hundred-year movement and development of American industry, government, and life from the wilderness through successive frontier stages to settled civilized conditions, it is interesting to observe, if one will refer to the U. S. Census maps mentioned above, that the moving frontier line did not advance at a uniform rate throughout its whole length. In fact, some portions moved much more rapidly than others. What especially stands out on the maps is that civilization seemed to flow around certain frontier areas, leaving them behind like unconquered islands of wilderness. Then a circular frontier line formed independent of the main advancing line and began to creep up and over each island wilderness, until in due time its conquest was made. This peculiar fact, namely, that the frontier line has sped on at certain points and left behind, unsubdued, certain areas of land, leads us to look into it more carefully, and to review the original situation, to see what really has taken place.

An unbiased look will show that agricultural land has, in virtually all cases, been "left behind" by the moving frontier in a retarded frontier condition; while urban land has kept up with the general movement of civilization. That agricultural land (carrying with it farm organization and community life) has moved and developed far more slowly out of wilderness conditions than urban land (carrying with it industrial organization and city life) is our observation; and that in turn becomes a point of departure for understanding Ameri-

can farm life. It is not really surprising to find agricultural land and communities "left behind" in retarded frontier conditions, to work their way slowly out to modern conditions, when we reckon up carefully all the physical difficulties of converting the wilderness and bringing agricultural land—farms, highways, institutions—into adjustment to a moving civilization. Nor is it difficult to see how urban land, in the history of America, has outstripped agricultural land in the process of adjustment to modern life. A bare look at the manner of development of each will suffice to convince one.

The farm family has subdued its unit of agricultural land, with certain exceptions which need not detain us, single-handed. This family cut the forest, broke land, stumped it, organized it, built on it, made roadways. The unit of urban land included in village, town, or city is subdued in most cases, even in early times, by a labor force. Collective effort builds buildings, streets, and institutions with relative rapidity. Where it takes decades to subdue urban land and to adjust it adequately to the purposes of city industry and life, it takes generations to subdue agricultural land and adjust it with similar adequacy to the purposes of agriculture and institutional life. Lest the full force of this contrast may be unheeded, let us follow a little further the unfolding of the rural community.

Evolution of Agricultural Groups from Frontier Conditions

A graphic picture of what occurred, humanly speaking, step by step, in the early agricultural life of

America would, if such a picture were possible, enable us to see what has led up to our present rural population groups. If we could reënact, as in a play, the slow occupancy of the agricultural land, family by family, we should see the justification of certain early groups of farm people, which have persisted in their original group form to our own day with small justification. We should see the local political group, such as the township, emerge from a chaos of widely separated farm families. Local governments these families must have. So the loose organization of local family units over a wide spread of land naturally follows. Nothing like a compact village, town, or city was possible. A grist-mill on a flowing water-power, a sawmill perchance, established one group; a post-office established another; a school, a church, as occasion required, and convenience and immediacy dictated, determined others. A trading-post, a village, a town, drew farmers together for trade who may have belonged to several different school groups and two or more mill groups. The circumstances that created the variety of various small groups of farm families continued for two or three generations at first, until custom had made the groupings seem right, and the general acceptance of such groupings became fixed in the rural and urban mind. As the years and generations rolled by in American history, farmers, having become accustomed to the frontier grouping and organization, began to "adjust themselves backward" to this social organization, awkward though it might be, without much thought of improvement, tak-

ing the penalty of maladjustment into their own souls as a matter of course.

The rural post-office groups had names and usually added to themselves a few other functions and services, as, for example, a store, a blacksmith shop, a tannery, a mill. Such post-office groups did not coincide with the school groups necessarily, as the school was adjusted to the walking capacity of the small child. The church group was determined on a principle of religious belief and conduct. This required usually a new set of territorial limits, coinciding very rarely with other groups. These groups might contain as few as half a dozen families or as many as a hundred. The general outstanding characteristic of this group situation is the partial overlapping of several distinct social groups of farm families with respect to institutions of service, school, religion, or trade.

It is quite as we might expect that these various groups have been in fluctuation, subject to considerable change and even decay. Rural post-offices went out of fashion. The groups began to decay. Trading-posts came and went with transport facilities. Their groups changed likewise. The country grist-mill, tannery, distillery, sawmill, declined. Their groups shifted. Schools of higher order came. New school communities came in. With shift by immigration of farm ownership from American to Norwegian, for example, or to other foreign race elements, old churches ceased, new church groups arose. With all the flux and change, however, the main characteristics continued; viz., the separateness and ter-

ritorial confusion of groups, partially overlapping, seldom consolidating, scarcely ever achieving adequacy.

Unless the agricultural community is to suffer inevitable arrest and the continual necessity of "adjustment backward" with a consequent social penalty for being farmers, we must all be prepared in our minds for the final step in the metamorphosis of the agricultural community from frontier organization to modern organization. This step may be as dramatic as the step from the worm to the butterfly. When the "horseless carriage" or the tractor took the place of the horse, there was no demand anywhere that the gas-driven horse should be made in the shape and form of an oat-and-hay-driven horse. When modern community organization displaces the farmers' frontier type of groupings, we shall not be surprised to see an utter change in form of the organization. The modern rural store is not to be thought of as a better cross-roads store; the modern rural blacksmith shop is not to be a better cross-roads blacksmith shop; the modern farmers' municipality is not likely to be a better township. They may all be on different models. We must look for forms of organization which are adjusted to the farmer's economic and intellectual development, and to the needs of a modern American home.

A Statement of the Rural Problem

The social problem of farm life as a whole may very well be conceived as the problem of mounting from the lower level of frontier organization up to the level of modern life and institutions. The problem in the large

is one of escape, escape from the menace of an arrested social development and of a stunted breed of society. The stolid peasant is a dwarf product of arrested growth. America is living in hope that its agriculture may escape a peasant society.

CHAPTER II

WHY FARMERS THINK AS THEY DO

"FARM people," it will be said, "are, in most respects, no different from any people. They eat, marry, work, love children, grow old, and die like everybody else. Why, therefore, single them out and ask about their habits of thought? As if there were any one who did n't know already how the farmer feels, thinks, and behaves in every-day life."

Yes, but does the ordinary man of the street, the wheat-eating man let us call him, know clear to the bottom of his soul what makes farmers feel as they do, think as they do, and act as they do? To know this, is to understand the farmer, and to understand the farmer is to place in the stream that flows between town and country the first stepping-stone to good relations with him. The wheat-eater, if he does not wish to be on a good footing with the wheat-raiser, must never attempt to fathom the wheat-raiser's mind. For that way, beyond a shadow of a doubt, lies friendliness to farm, farming, and farmer.

Let us be bold enough to hope and take for granted that all wheat-eaters and cotton-wearers wish to travel this way of friendliness. We shall, therefore, take a modest look into the farmer's mind.

Three influences in life, we are safe in saying, strongly

color the way people view things; viz., their own occupation, that is, the sort of work they do for a livelihood; their own residence, that is, where and under what conditions they live while at home; their own institutions, that is, established orders and systems to which they are subject from youth up. Let us consider these three influences in the life of the farmer, and see whether they do not give the clue to why farmers think as they do.

Farming the Only Occupation of Its Kind

The peculiar, even unique, character of farming—or of agriculture, if one prefers a term of noble mien—grows on the student as he goes further and further into its history. The unlikeness of the plow to the anvil, no less than that of the wheat-harvesting combine to the printing-press, tells the whole story of peculiar farm tools and machines. The dissimilar muscle-action of the farmer, moreover, in holding the plow from sun to sun, moving over many a mile in the open, as compared with that of the dentist, tools in hand, standing indoors all day by the upturned open mouth of his patient, has wrought upon the farmer's frame a different type of body from the dentist's.

But the unique character of farming, much as the tools of farming differ from all other tools and much as the muscular actions of farmers differ from the muscular actions of workers in all other occupations—the uniqueness of farming, I say, stands out preeminently in the products of the farm. Let us look at

the products of industry and compare them with the products of the farm and try to estimate the peculiarity of the farmer's occupation.

Leather and shoes, steel and rails, paper and books, flour and bread, lumber and houses—can you see them in the making? Is one shoe planted and does a pair of shoes come forth? Is a house set into the ground and do three houses spring up? Are books sown broadcast and is a library harvested? That would be a miracle, indeed.

You see rather patterns, models, specifications. You see steel red-hot, rolled and flattened, rolled and lengthened, shaped, and cut to measure. You see the builder measure, cut, fit, put together, nail fast, piece on piece, just as the working plan demands. The steel rail emerges as the will of the workers wished. The house arises as willed and desired. The shoes are stitched as designed. Books are planned and made to meet the plan. Industry uses lifeless, will-less, inert materials for its products; and so the worker, the will behind the tool and machine, is habituated to this ruthless shaping of matter into product according to design.

And the farmer and his product? Thirty kernels of wheat like this kernel; a hundred clover plants like this clover plant; six hogs like this hog.

Yes, the farmer has his model, his pattern, his specifications. But he puts his wheat model into the ground, and waits, biding the season of growth. Then he plucks his thirty kernels grown to be like the model. The thirty are kin to the one. The six hogs are kin to

the one hog. Live beings the farmer makes. Lifeless things the industrialist constructs.

This means that farming is the only occupation of its kind; and the peculiarity is more pronounced in the product, if that were possible, than in the process or in the tools.

Farm Home Unlike Any Other Homes

The farm home in America has three decided peculiarities; it is in sight of or close to the field work and chores of the farmer; it is separated by considerable distances from the homes of other families; its neighbors, however near or far away they may be, are also farmers. A look at these three circumstances of farm life will discover to the thoughtful observer how farmers in America come to think as they do.

The American frontier farmer had to live on his land in touch with his fields. He wanted to be close to his animals to protect them. He felt safer about his growing crops, if he could keep them in sight. Then, too, he was a time-saver, and did not care to be going long distances back and forth to work. But above everything else the American farmer knew of no better place to live on than the spot close to the land that was his, close to the animals he was used to, in sight of the growing plants he was coaxing. This sweep of the eye over his domain after work is done, this deep draft of satisfaction in the midst of his pet treasures, his properties, is unique. It is the landsman's life.

The American farmer never locks his office door and

goes home to his family to forget his work. His work things—his crops, his animals—why, they are alive. They are, as it were, a part of his family. Nearness to work is of the essence of farming. The real farmer never dismisses his lambs and calves and colts for the night, any more than he does his children when he puts them to bed and tucks them in. He is on call. How different it is with the banker, merchant, doctor, carpenter, artisan!

The trader on the frontier lived in his store. The doctor had his office in his house. Craftsmen of all sorts in early days economized by living with their craft. But those days for American industry are gone. Only remnants of such pioneering are seen here and there. Pity grips the heart when one discovers a family in village, town, or city, living darkly in the rear of a shop, over or under a store, in the midst of garments in the making to sell.

No, city industry can be put under lock and key. The worker can go home, out of sight of work, out of hearing of machines, buzzers, and bells, and forget his tasks with satisfaction. The joy of dismissing city work at sunset, retreating to the family, resting apart and away, thrills banker and spinner alike. Is the reason the speed and strain of city work? Is it the inert product of industry? Is it the monotonous specialization upon one thing? At any rate, city industry is not to be lived with. Fortunate the city worker who can put miles between his work and his home! But happy the farmer who lives where his eye reaches every nook and corner of his farm!

The second peculiar feature of the farm home is its distance from neighbors. The very commonplaceness of this circumstance is perplexing to one who tries to see all the results that flow from it.

Although a farm home may have two neighbor homes lying within the distance of one mile, the likelihood is that the greater number of neighbors live at least three miles away, out of sight and hearing. This situation approaches a condition of solitary living. At least we can understand the situation better, if—granted that it is an extreme illustration—we try to analyze the effect upon a single person or a single family of having an abode so far from people as to be living in an atmosphere of uninterrupted privacy.

The key to understanding such a life is that the life is all one's own. Whatever the advantages may be of having perfect freedom from other wills, that advantage comes to the solitary. On the other hand, whatever loss comes from having nothing added to life from the soul of another person, that loss must be accepted with the advantage. The family that lives alone lives its own life in its own way. It is strong in that it is a solid unit; it is weak in that it is federated with no allies. The nearer the farm family comes to this solitary life, the more nearly it takes the loss and gain of absolute privacy.

The silent, perhaps unconscious, restraint upon a person or a family having close neighbors, and many close neighbors indeed, is in tremendous contrast with the silent unconscious freedom of the recluse. The constraint put upon every member of a family by the pres-

ence for a single day even of a stranger in the home is almost painful, so aware is everybody of the visitor. But the restraint of near neighbors in a town, although second nature and hardly recognized, is none the less actual and powerful. This type of restraining and constraining influence for good or for evil is of a piece with society itself. The townsman lives not his own life in his own way, but he lives the life of others; while the American farm family, more or less, it must be confessed, lives its own kind of life.

The third peculiar circumstance about the farm home is that farmers have only farmers for neighbors. It takes a little imagination to get the full force of this fact. In America farmers are, broadly speaking, in groups together. Farmers live together as pines grow together in pine forests, spared the presence of other kinds of trees.

But bankers for neighbors have physicians, merchants, contractors, real-estate brokers, and the like. In terms of forests, city people live like a jungle of all kinds of trees and vines. One can only begin to realize how peculiar this fact is when he asks himself what would happen to American democracy if all the barbers in America lived in barber groups, all hardware merchants in hardware groups, plumbers in plumber groups, lawyers in attorney groups, clergy in ministerial groups, and so on to the end of the chapter? The bare statement of this question shows what an eccentric fact, especially in a great democracy like ours, is this fact of the segregation of farmers off by themselves in their every-day home life.

Rural Institutions Cast in a Peculiar Mold

The farmer's private property is land in stretched-out acres. He has a few buildings and some goods, of course, but land is the type. The city man's private property is buildings and goods. He has a few square feet of land, of course, but buildings and goods are the type.

Farm tenancy, a relationship between the landowner and the landless man, is quite different from city tenancy, a relationship between a building owner and a building-less man.

The farm family, so far as the law of the family relationship is concerned, is identical with the city family; but many colorful differences exist, growing out of the peculiarities in respect to occupation and residence. The family on the farm is a workaday partnership between husband, wife, and children in the same business enterprise. In the city family, if other members than the husband are at work, they are usually in other businesses. The city wife, however, is seldom more than a home-maker. She may, if her surplus energy permits, crave an outlet in some career, or in some minor task, at least, which shall take her out of her home for a respite. But seldom does she find this congenial task or career in business or in a work which gives financial returns. It comes rather, when it comes at all, in charity, in church relations, in social functions, except of course in the marginal family where the wife is breadwinner and home-maker, too.

Farm children are a financial asset to the family,

because there are forms of work in the farm enterprise suited to their years. The city child is a financial liability. So the city home contains fewer children than the farm home.

In giving children a productive value and in furnishing the wife a business interest, the farm furnishes a family motive without equal in city life.

Rural local government is so unlike village, town, or city government that in comparison the farm community seems to run along without government. The tax-receipts in the farmer's drawer prove that there is a government; but the evidences are few that farm life is under a strict system of control, guidance, inspection, protection by officers of law.

The country school is as yet typically a one-room, one-teacher, ungraded school. The country church is a preaching-place, and so typically an auditorium. The farmer's trading-post is still in many parts of the United States a single country store, or a small hamlet provided with a store or two and a repair-shop or two.

It is unnecessary to call to mind further examples of farmers' institutions in order to give evidence of their peculiar nature.

If one would honestly understand the farmer and his children, he should go to the very bottom of these three influences—namely, farming, farm home, and farm institutions—which appear to be peculiar to such an outstanding degree, and discover how they color the farmer's habits of thought and feeling. Let us briefly undertake to sketch some of the paths the farmer travels

in his thinking, paths which lead directly from these three circumstances in his life.

Peculiar Traits of Mind the Result of Farm Experience

If it is true that "as a man thinketh" so is he, equally is it true that as a man is so thinketh he. That is, experience makes the stuff man is and out of which his thoughts flow; and a peculiar life and work experience builds up a peculiar man whose habits of thought have a peculiar color. We are prepared, at this point of our discussion, then, to find the American farmer to some degree a man unlike other men, with a cast of thought peculiarly his own. If possible, let us try to catch in phrase some of the traits of the farmer's mind which are referable to his life and labors.

If the American farmer's occupation held undisputed sway over his life, he would be America's greatest traditionalist and conservatist. But, of course, other influences than his business do operate upon him. Nevertheless, he still is a great traditionalist and a great conservatist.

The farmer's first thought, however powerful his second thought may be, is apt to run in this fashion: "Is this thing the same as we are used to? If so, it is good so far. If not, it is bad so far."

Being "good so far" is not final approval from the farmer, any more than being "bad so far" is final disapproval; but being like what the farmer is used to is an advantage so precious that the sagacious advertiser

to farmers of something new first of all tries to show that however different the thing looks, it is after all precisely the same as the farmer is used to.

Why is the farmer's first thought what it is? Simply this. In his business life like begets like. The seed-corn begets corn like the seed. The cow is like dam or sire. The farmer, in other words, produces things that are like other things. Similarity to the past is the basis of his success. He has built up a technic upon like producing like. He expects likeness, sameness, identity. The dissimilar breaks the thread of continuity. It is a bit of disharmony in his scheme. Difference, unheard-of newness, must first of all prove to be in some sense the same as the old and well known; for in and of itself to be different is to be outlawed. Even if difference may stir his curiosity, it is at first a freak with him. It must be naturalized and brought into his system through the law of kind and kinship before he accepts it.

Second thought, the effect of education and acquaintance with life in other fields, may reverse the first thought; but at this point will come the struggle between what is native and what is acquired. In the struggle, first thought usually wins, unless second thought has some strong allies.

The farmer is, to consider another mental attitude of his, our original naïve teleologist; and the worker in iron is our original untutored materialist.

The farmer in his trade saves a seed alive, adjusts it to certain forces, and then feeds the live thing and protects it, watching, meanwhile, for it to develop by a law

and power hidden within itself. He somehow never can get over this phenomenon of automatic growth. The doing it all by itself—the coming true to purpose, whether he, the farmer, wills it or not—is blind proof to the farmer of an intelligent, purposeful design residing in nature.

This mystery of life, of growth, of reproduction, is the great fact envisaging his occupation. He accepts it, and then proceeds to adapt the idea to all the circumstances of his own life as a doctrine and law of conduct. He expects and waits for this mysterious force to enter and operate in all his enterprises.

Saving a place for fate—or, to put it differently, setting a limit to what the farmer can do for himself on account of the great part played by nature—is a practical resignation, here or there, of responsibility and a passing of the rôle and turn to mystery. This frame of mind may account, along with other reasons to be sure, for the failure of the old farmer type to grapple with its problems more vigorously by the method of collective action.

The worker in iron shapes his product all along its tortuous journey. He feeds it nothing. He never thinks of it as alive. It is dead, insensate matter. The iron-master, without ruth or pity, heats, hammers, cuts, drills, rolls, and shapes the iron to his own design.

It is perhaps no wonder that the iron-master, unless checked by experience in other ways, saves no place for mystery, sets no limits to his own control, and views his own life as one wholly to be made on the model existing in his own will.

These two different habits of thought growing out of different experiences may serve to explain each other.

The deliberateness and caution of the farmer are a proverb. Why is it so? Why is the farmer the outstanding example of waiting and of precaution?

The answer is not far to seek, if it is true that experience colors all life and thought. The farmer waits for his crops to grow, after he has done his part. This is a long wait. His unit—a year, frequently, as with cattle—runs into several years. It takes years, often, to get land into form for high production. Timeliness, waiting for the right time, rather than speediness, seems to pay him. You cannot marvel that the farmer pursues a similar method in all his doings. He is used to deliberate action, has found its value, and is inclined to adopt it in his other enterprises.

His caution—a certain interesting wariness in regard to persons, ideas, plans, indeed, or whatever the occasions that arise—is most natural. Just take a look here. Both heat and cold are his friends, also rain and dryness. But heat is also one of his enemies. Cold is just as much an enemy. Rain may drown his crops as well as gently water them. Drouth may shrivel, as well as dryness may ripen. The farmer is accustomed to gage his friendly allies up to the point of their double-crossing and turning enemies; and he is always prepared for the turn and break. This caution, this demi-suspicion of friend and foe, is second nature, as self-preservation is first nature. The habit flows easily over into other relations of life. Just as the athlete takes his springy muscles with him into the amenities of the

drawing-room—in repose if you please, but prepared for any emergency—so the farmer takes his caution with him to town.

Farmers, perhaps because of their habit of being resigned to the inevitableness of physical climate which meets them on every side, have always seemed to accept, with more or less protest to be sure, the minimums of life—the little end, the sacrificial side, the incomplete. The "inferiority complex," so to speak, is a habitual attitude with the farmer; but complicated, just as truly, by a peculiar superiority complex.

Just as the farmer has always saved the littles, because in farming there comes a use some day for almost any odd or end, so he has taken the "half-loaf" and prized it, rather than risk all for the "whole loaf."

This characteristic seems tied up with the whole thrift habit of farm people. If crops have come quarter-crops, they have been accepted, garnered, utilized. So if life has sent minimum advantages, farmers have pocketed them, sung a pæan, and utilized them.

Saving everything for utilization is so wrapped up with farming that no one can long wonder at the farmer's money thrift when he once sees what the farmer's thrift experience takes him through. Cattle eat what is left in the fields. Hogs follow the cattle. Poultry follow the hogs. Every scrap of waste is put on the land. The tree falls. It is converted into lumber, posts, rails, wood, ashes. Ashes go back on the land. Value is attached to every little thing. Thrift is the outcome of this feeling of value. And, though grumbling will be heard over the land like thunder in the

mountains, the farmer folk will accept the minimums of life and be thankful.

That the farmer is an individualist everybody has heard, but not everybody knows why. The farmer's son at eighteen leaves the farm, goes to the city, enters trade, and loses his earmarks of individualism. The father remains on the farm, and keeps the earmarks. Why?

It is the farmer's solitary business on the land, his solitary residence distant from masses of people, and his being set off with farmer neighbors in a class group —this is what accounts for it. He is left very much to himself and his own thoughts. When not with other people he is very likely to be with his own family, whose policies he is accustomed to control. When with his own class, his farmer neighbors, the type of thinking is similar to his own. The farmer thinks and makes up his own mind. This is because his mind does not clash with those of others. He has to make up his own mind by himself so much that he is not accustomed to the social process of quiet conference and modification. This tendency to a mind "made up," closed without let or conference, is a trait of lonely people, and so of farmers, at least so far as they lead the lonely life.

The pioneer farmer of America, as we have noted, accepted in the matter of institutions the crumbs that fell from the American table. The table was furnished with trading towns and cities: the farmer eagerly took up with a trade crumb, the country store. The table came to have graded schools and high schools: the crumb was a little one-teacher school. The city table

had libraries: the crumb some States have let fall in these later days is a box of books, the so-called "traveling library."

What has been the effect of frontier types of institutions upon the farmer's thought? The answer is this: while the crumb was better than no bread, it served to keep alive and intrench the peculiar traits of thought induced by the peculiar occupation of farming and by the peculiar home surroundings. Solitariness and detachment from the broad stream of life characterize the farmer's institutions just as they do the farmer's home. And, furthermore, what is particularly distressing, the farmer's tendency to accept the inferior social institution, and to be resigned to the minimum, was perpetuated by the inferior institutions themselves. When social institutions are weaker than the family and the home, little can be hoped from the institution to compensate for deficiencies in the family and home. The farmer has never been able to accumulate a surplus in great social institutions which in turn would give him and his family multiplied power in thinking. He has been like the man who can never save the first thousand dollars which shall furnish the power of capital to speed on his livelihood-making. Such a man is in bonds, fettered to the narrow ability of his own two hands day by day; so the farmer, unable to rear outside the home great social institutions, has been restricted in his experience and thinking to the forces lying close within his business and home.

Are farmers in fault because they think as they do? Or, indeed, are they to be praised above all other

classes for their attitudes of mind? No, in either case. Their experience, day in and day out, year after year, will shape their thinking, just as experience does the thinking of other classes. Only by falling heir to new avenues of other experience than the routine of farm work and home life and the frontier rural institutions, can farmers undergo much change in their thinking.

The social psychology of the farmer group, when compared with the social psychology of other occupational groups, will derive such variations as it may have from the basic peculiarities of farming, the farm home, and farm institutions. It will make a book in itself to trace the farmer mind through the history of the farmers' national political movements, through the history of the farmers' social and economic organizations, through the farmers' commodity coöperatives, through the modern rural educational movement, and through the modern rural religious revival.

The spasmodic attempts of the farmer to throw off his characteristic air of resignation to the minimums of social life will, when rehearsed and examined from the point of view of this discussion, remarkably light up the struggles of the land-worker on his way to equality with other men.

What Will the Farmer of the Future Think?

In the previous discussions of this chapter, the farmer is spoken of as if all farmers were alike. The fact is that there are great differences in types of farmers. Not only are there differing types of farming, such as wheat farming, small-grain farming, dairy farming, live-

stock farming, fruit farming, cotton farming, vegetable farming; but what is more conspicuous, there are, within each so-called type of farming, farmers of a scientific habit of farm practice as well as farmers of a traditional habit of farm practice.

Within certain types of farming, moreover, considerable control of the form and substance of the farm product has come to be a matter of fact, at least a much larger control than in traditional farming. When modern science enters that type, as it frequently does enter, the control becomes still greater. The result is that the future farmer is plainly to be a man who, though still engaged in growing live seeds, plants, and animals, is so carefully processing his breeds, feeds, and care that he is shaping his products up to specification, somewhat like the worker in steel, brass, or leather. The future farmer, we may confidently expect, therefore, will be closer to the city worker in the type of his thought than the farmer has ever been heretofore.

The surfaced roadway, especially when developed into community systems as well as into state trunk systems, will so reduce the distance of the farmer from other people as largely to overcome the isolation of the farmer's family in residence. Farmers living on a surfaced highway five miles distant from their trading place are only ten minutes away from town. They are nearer the town bank, the town opera-house, the town church, or town school than the merchant living on the edge of his town was in the days when the automobile was very little in evidence. This new farmer is certain to be more like other people because his residence is only

ten minutes from everybody living within five miles on surfaced roads.

The complete trading town is beginning to replace the country store and hamlet; the large-scale school is displacing slowly the little district school; the country high school and the village high school are giving a better educational chance to farm children; the rural community house is being added to farm community life; the commodity coöperative unit is slowly entering the farm community; country parks, athletic fields, picnic grounds, recreation swimming-pools, are an addition to country life. The new type of larger, better adjusted institution already to be found in every State is expanding the new farm community.

These newer institutions are not merely the result of more prosperous days in agriculture. They are the outcome of social perception, ambition, comparison, on the part of certain more favorably circumstanced communities. They have come from much preaching, much discussion, fine leadership. A new type of farmer will grow up in the midst of these modern institutions. He will be more like other people because he will have more of the influences about him which have made other people. But the new farmer, in becoming more like other men, will, it is quite sure, in turn modify his family and community life so as to develop all the best there is in country life and eliminate a great deal that has been the curse of living in the country.

The older farmer type thinks as he does because he cannot help it. The old farm and the old farm life made and makes the old farmer. The new farmer type, the

future farmer, will think as he will because he is the result of the new farming and the new farm community.

It is especially important for non-farmers to go through an analysis of farmer thought just to get the contrast between the new and the old farmer attitudes. It will not improve industrial life or city business to look upon and regard the American farmer of the near future as of the old type. It will help the city, however, in regard to all city thinking on any problem in which the farmer is concerned, to leave a place in the problem for the new farmer type.

At least fifty per cent of farm boys and girls go to town and city in adolescence and permanently enter industry and professional life. Going as they do in their late teens, they quickly absorb the city point of view and industrial thinking. The folk-ways in farm life, however, lie embedded in their character; and the antagonism between town and country, farm and city, will, it is to be expected, greatly diminish as the new farmer supplants the old farmer.

The Weak Spot in Our Portraiture

We have spoken as if the hoe-farmer in America were gone forever, and as if the machine-farmer were here to stay forever. We have practically assumed in our discussion up to now that farm psychology is making an upward change of a permanent character. But suppose that the reign of the farm machine has nearly reached its climax already and that conditions are about to set in which tend to eliminate the machine and restore the hoe? This is the grain of pessimism that inheres in

farming. Did not the large landholder in Rumania before the war employ the high types of farm machines in an efficient agriculture? And after the war, on the break-up of the large holdings, did not the peasants junk the machines and go back to peasant farming? Who will guarantee that peasant farming shall never creep over America? Who will guarantee that landholding in America shall not pass into the small holdings of peasant owners and peasant tenants? Who can guarantee that America shall not be so thoroughly industrialized that the clamor for cheap food will not break down our immigration bars and let in a peasant population upon the land?

It is this uncertainty that keeps the agrarian statesman awake. The thinking of the American farmer will be gaged by the conditions under which he labors. If the peasant follows close upon the heels of a disappearing farm engineer, then peasant thinking will come to be the habit of the farm community. If the hoe returns and muscle again becomes the engine of farm power, then rural society will suffer a reverse and enter upon one more long era of rising, falling, and rising again. This possible dark spot in the portrait of the future farmer will keep alert all those who believe that conditions surrounding the thinker gear thinking up or down. The well balanced patriot takes the pessimism into full account, while he tries to work out his rosy portrait.

CHAPTER III

THE FARMER'S STANDARD OF LIVING

"LIVING conditions," "standard of living," "better housing," "better home surroundings," are phrases so current that the man of the street in our cities has a knowledge of them sufficient for intelligent conversation. City industry has studied the human factor in production. It has sized up the influence and bearing of many personal characteristics of its labor force. Factories of the higher order now quote "the figures" on "better housing," "better food," some "leisure," "night schools," as these relate to annual production. In fact, the theory is quite general that industrial labor in America must have a good "standard of living" in order to produce American goods.

The labor-unions and the American Federation of Labor have not been slow to seize upon this theory of American production as a weapon of economic offense and defense to enforce wage demands. The basic theory of labor in every new wage demand or amelioration of working conditions, whether of shorter hours or protection from occupational accident and disability, is keeping a "decent standard of living." This "fair standard" or "high standard" or "decent standard" of living has come to have an equivalent, viz., "American

standard of living." However indefinite the concept, "American standard of living" means in most minds a condition of living with respect to food, housing, clothes, leisure, education, insurance, amusement, religion, which an American need not be ashamed of; a condition of living surrounding the American workman which results in better work, at the same time that the worker is given a chance to improve his opportunities and ascend the American ladder of progress.

When we pass from the city industrial wage-worker over to agriculture and to discussions of agricultural problems, standard of living for the most part drops out of sight. The farmer is urging in his defense the high cost of production of the products he has to sell, the high price of what he has to buy for his family, and the low price at which he must sell his own products, if indeed he can sell them at all. His emotions have evidently been so taken up with the demonstrable disparity between what he gets and what he pays that he has overlooked or discounted the argument of "standard of living." Farm labor in America, moreover, has yet no public voice, no union, no press organ, no economic theory or policy. It seems willing yet to rise with the rise of the farmer, and to depend upon the farmer's argument, organization, legislative lobby, and agricultural press to restore himself when he drops with the farmer. The tenant farmer, even, has not succeeded in differentiating his cause from the farm owner-operator, at least enough to employ the standard of living weapon. There are, however, signs that the three agricultural classes will soon be taking stock of their living

conditions and bringing standard of living to bear on economic discussions.

The movement of negro farm workers from the fields of the South to the factories of the North is causing Southern landowners to start a better housing program on their plantations. If the old cabins do not hold the colored man to the plantation, more modern houses may. Where good tenant farmers are at a premium, a sanitary comfortable house may be a local inducement of a decisive nature. Farm-owning operators having sons and daughters of the adolescent age agree to the installation of modern systems of water-supply, heating, and lighting as a last resort in the endeavor to retain their children on the farm. Better standards are of course being adopted—in some things, moreover, under the force of modern pushing commercial agencies. But, as a stated problem, the subject on the whole has risen very little into public consciousness. It is true that one leading farm economist has uttered the advice to farmers to begin a regular policy of investing surplus in better facilities for family living rather than of racing with one another for more land, and so boosting up the land values of the country-side to the danger point.

There is one aspect, however, in the development of agriculture which should be noted at this point, for the reason that it indicates how ready the farmer class is to consider broadly the question of standards of living. This is it. For two decades the farmer has discussed the living of his animals from every point of view, and he is perfectly acquainted with a high standard of living and a low standard for cows, hogs, horses, beef-cattle,

sheep, and poultry. This concept of standard of living goes from food to shelter, exercise, handling by men, health, and the like. The farmer of America now understands in regard to his live stock the values of scientific feeding, adequate housing, health protection, and gentle treatment.

No argument is needed now in farmer gatherings to justify even specialized housing for different types of animals: dairy barns, hog houses, poultry houses. No argument is needed for the comfort of easy stanchions, sanitary barn-yards, humane handling of animals. It looks as if the way were paved from the farm right up to the farm-house and farm family for the scientific discussion and consideration of the standard of living of the farm family.

Family Living

The basic factors in living, so far as they are more or less under control of the family and are subject to measurement and discussion, are generally agreed to be food, clothing, fuel, housing, operation, maintenance of health, advancement (including education, religion, travel, etc.), personal savings, government. Such broad headings are serviceable simply as a means of classifying all the items that make up the satisfaction of family wants. These items cost something. They must be provided either through purchase or effort. They constitute the aim of a farm family, and provide the motive-power for occupational work. To be aware of all the wants of a farm family, to sum up and classify these wants during a whole year, is to

enter upon the consideration of family living. These wants and these goods are the stuff which every-day family life is made up of. They form severally in every farm home the bulk of the topics for conversation. Nothing is more interesting, nothing more commonplace. And yet in spite of this fact, how seldom a family attempts to become master of all the details of its annual living! How few families know how to compare one set of wants with another! How few families provide for a distribution of goods to meet their wants in proportion to the priorities required by a normal, healthy family life! The commonplace and familiar affords a field for mysteries, just because the family is so immersed in life piece by piece, day by day, that it can never manage to find time to look at its experience as a whole.

The Idea of Standard of Living

Many items, we have seen, enter into the idea of living. The several major items, such as food, clothing, and housing, for example, break up into a perfect multitude of items. Foods are many, far more in their differing varieties than the ordinary person suspects. Meat, milk, wheat, butter, fruit, etc.—each breaks into many varieties. And each variety presents many grades and conditions, according to age, handling, cooking, and the like. Clothing is a manifold factor. Housing with its furnishings and equipment is also multi-varied.

In the presence of this multiplicity of varieties and grades and conditions of all the elements of entering into "living goods," one must constantly ask the question,

"Which kind do you mean?" or "Which proportion do you mean?" The answer to and decision of these questions all depend upon what is aimed at in a living over and above bare keeping alive; or, as is more often the case, upon what can be afforded. Food has more uses, apparently, than simple sustenance. Food is taken by a group of the family at a meal, and this meal is a social occasion. To linger over a meal, around the table, is more or less a custom. The pleasing form of food, the variety of possible pleasing forms, enter into the question of how far a family can afford to go in the matter of adjusting food to social uses. Clothes, likewise, are social as well as sheltering and protective. No single utility of living has been seized upon by the human race and made to express social and esthetic ideas more generally than clothes. In any consideration of the function of clothes from the point of view of how far to go in variety, textile materials, color, form, style, there must be considered this matter of social utilization as well as bodily protection. It is a very complicated process deliberately and rationally to adjust family living both to basic bodily wants and to social uses. Housing and house furnishings carry a mark of quality. Vehicles stamp the owners with class distinction. People have come to put their class and quality into these necessities of life, and so show to the world where they stand. Life is so short; conversation is so tedious; a quick method is needed of indicating where one belongs. Living utilities are discovered to be quickly discernible means of advertising these things.

But social quality and basic necessity are only two aspects of living facilities which call for decision according to some measure or standard of what is wanted. The nutrition scientist has his point of view on foods; the clothing expert, on clothes; the home economist, on housing; the educator, on schooling. It is not bare keeping alive, not an insignia of taste, quality, and class, but a function, that these scientists plead for, adjusted to an ampler, fuller, more adequate keeping alive, which at the same time takes into account what can be afforded, what is feasible, practicable.

Out of the multiplicity of possible choices of family living and family living facilities, to choose rationally means setting up standards of choice; to choose irrationally is to take what comes; to choose and follow custom, which is the usual way, is to shift responsibility to a natural long-time sifting-out process. But the very important thing to be seen at this point is that these standards of choice, whether rational or irrational, are usually very intangible, very indefinite, hard to state, and impossible of exact or statistical expression. Here is where the statistician enters the discussion arm in arm with the home economist, the farm economist, and the sociologist.

The home economist says, "If I am to assist the farm family in a more orderly, economical, adequate expenditure of the family income on living materials and facilities, I must be able to compare quickly and intelligibly the living of family with family wherever they may reside."

The farm economist says, "If I am expected to answer

the question of what kind of a living the farm family can afford, I must have some way of speaking of the living so that it shall be exactly the same as that considered by the home economist."

The rural sociologist says, "If the living of farmers is to be related to a program of rural progress, present family living must be susceptible of definite description so that we may understand where the deficiencies lie, and prepare to better the conditions."

The statistician says: "My friends, you are in need of me, I plainly see. Everybody has been speaking vaguely of this matter of farm family living. No builder could build a house using his materials so vaguely. Every part of a house is measurable, describable. It can therefore be specified, and the cost forecast. I will help you measure the living of farm families. I will help you erect measures and standards. You will then be able to build up an annual budget of living for a family of any particular income. You will be able to say that such and such an income will not afford a basic living. But such and such another income will. This income will support a man and wife. This income, a family of three. This income, a family of seven."

Let us follow the steps of the learned quartet a little further as they try to elucidate their problem and search for a statistical standard of the living of the farm family.

The statistician points out: "There is one measure of living materials, goods, or facilities that is ready at

hand, viz., the dollar measure, or measure of cost of these goods to the family. What a family uses, whether furnished by the farm or purchased, may be reckoned in quantities and then the costs determined." So it would be possible for any farm family to find out the cost of its annual living. "In like manner, it could be found out," the statistician continues, "what the living of the farm family of any region or State of the United States costs, supposing that a farm family of any size or make-up is considered a unit, and that the costs of all families in the group desired were ascertained for a year."

If a study of the costs of living of the farm families of a region were made, then it would be found that there were certain well defined gradations of costs, correlated broadly with the presence or absence of certain facilities in living. These particular costs would come to stand out undoubtedly as standards. And so there might come into vogue the thousand-dollar family, fifteen-hundred-dollar family, two-thousand-dollar family, three-thousand-dollar family.

The cost of living in dollars would tend to become a standard of living; and it would almost occur that the thousand-dollar living would come to be thought of as a low standard and the three-thousand-dollar living as a high standard. The assumption then would be that, as farm families run, the greater the cost, the better the living.

It will be quickly pointed out by the home economist that food may be costly in a budget but not necessarily

nourishing; clothes may be high-priced, but not warmer, not more durable than some that are low-priced; houses may be inexpensive, but just as comfortable and protective as expensive ones. And these statements would have truth. But in the absence of any other method of measuring living goods, the cost of living will be gladly put into service, temporarily at least, as a standard.

It is not beyond expectation that the home economist, the economist, the rural sociologist, and the statistician will eventually discover other standards than the cost, for the farm family's living. It would be scarcely short of a miracle, however, to discover any other single standard; though it is possible that a better standard than the dollar may be found for food, for clothes, for housing, and for each of the other factors.

Perhaps the dollar could be employed to bring into a common measure each of these revised better measures. Certainly such a cost figure, if possible, would be far superior to the present cost standard and would be free from the charge that the dollar had no necessary relation to utility or basic value.

Present Knowledge about the Farm Family's Living

Do we know anything about the American farm family's living even in a vague, general way? Yes, something. Everybody knows, of course, that the farm itself furnishes, even in these days of production for the domestic and world market, a not inconsiderable amount of the family living. This fact presents an interesting difference between farm families and city families. That

the farm and the garden and the orchard can furnish house-rent, fuel, meat, milk, eggs, poultry, potatoes, apples, other fruits, small fruits, without interfering with or diminishing the marketing of the regular annual crop, is a salient advantage that must never be overlooked in a discussion of the farmer's standard of living. This is the fact that makes agriculture so independent and self-sufficing. This fact has in all history set even the peasants apart in hard times as a fortunate class. Moreover, the kinds of food furnished, close to the source as they are, and excelling in freshness, are basic. They are such as all families crave to give body and balance to the family ration. The fact that farmers in some regions neglect the possibilities of furnishing their own tables with milk, eggs, vegetables, fruits, is one of the many incomprehensible things in human nature.

A study of the family living of 483 families in ten widely scattered States, so far as it was furnished by the farm, was made in the summer of 1913 by the United States Department of Agriculture. It was found that the farm furnished per family $261.35 worth of food; $34.72 worth of fuel; $125.10 worth of house-rent; a total of $421.17, which was $91.97 per capita. In terms of the present-day buying power of the dollar, this would be equivalent to about $634 per family and $140 per person.

A study made in 1921 by the Department of Agriculture of the living furnished and purchased by the farm in 402 farm families of New York State indicates the following:

Item	OWNER FAMILIES (295)			TENANT FAMILIES (107)		
	Furnished	*Purchased*	*Total*	*Furnished*	*Purchased*	*Total*
	Dollars	*Dollars*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*
Food	399	379	778	398	441	839
Clothing	4	269	273	5	288	293
Rent	237	....	237	226	....	226
Fuel	56	90	146	69	72	141
All other expenses	34	515	549	29	570	599
Total	730	1253	1983	727	1371	2098
"All other expenses" itemized						
Operating expenses	34	84	118	29	109	138
Maintenance of health	...	76	76	...	102	102
Advancement	...	318	318	...	327	327
Personal	...	23	23	...	25	25
Unclassified	...	14	14	...	7	7
Total	34	515	549	29	570	599

It would, in all likelihood, be a fair statement of the case that with the knowledge which home economics is bringing to the women of America, and especially to the rural women, the farm home at the end of the next decade will be able to make a showing from twenty per cent to thirty-five per cent better than now, in the matter of what the farm furnishes to the average farm family's living.

Many similar studies will be necessary before we shall know about the farm family's living. We need to know the living on the upper level, the lower level, and the mid-level. We need to know the owner's living on these levels, and the tenant's living, as well as the living of the family of the farm wage laborer.

Farmers' Standard of Living and Its Influence

It is a usual assumption that a good living tends to high production, whether in a family, class, region, or nation. A good living and a stable production of goods of quality are assumed to go hand in hand. We need more light on this assumption, especially since a bare assumption is so little convincing. We need to be convinced by incontrovertible facts that a well fed, well housed, well educated farm community well equipped with institutions is a better producer than a poorly nourished, poorly housed, poorly educated community. There is a sly opinion still floating among certain types of public men that cheap labor on farms, low-standard workers and operators of farms, can produce the nation's food and fiber just as well as high-standard workers. Such men forget among other things that the industrialist

needs a high-standard market for his goods. Thirty millions of low-standard farm people, buying a great deal less because wanting a great deal less, would scarcely make a sufficient market for America's city-made goods. At present cities count upon a great farm market for high-grade goods.

The low standard of living on farms—low from any point of view or by any criterion—will drive good farmers eventually into other occupations, and inevitably tend to run the farm population through a sieve that sorts out the better men and women and leaves the poorer grade to enjoy the low standard of living. Migration of the best men and women away from the farms is the answer to a low standard of livelihood on farms.

Factors That Modify Farmers' Standards of Living

Passing over the great factors, income, net worth, and general financial ability—factors that automatically set limits to the standard of life which a family may afford—let us look at some less well known factors that modify the farmers' quality of living.

The first to engage our attention is the system of retail merchandising to which farm families are subject in making the expenditure of whatever income they have. Food, clothing, house-furnishings, and the like come to the farmer quite largely through the medium of country stores, small hamlet stores, small village stores. It is enough to excite our surprise if not our suspicion, when we compare the assistance city stores offer to the middle classes of city people with the assistance afforded by

country stores to farmers. City stores bring an intelligent appreciation of a high standard of living to bear upon their merchandising methods. The country stores as yet simply sell commodities over the counter. We cannot but feel that the farmer is not being intelligently served by his agents of trade and that he is decidedly handicapped in his effort to maintain an American standard of living.

Another factor influencing standards is the condition of American rural highways. Highways measure opportunity to purchase commodities, goods, and skilled services. Highways determine facilities for advancement. So long as highways are generally bad, and impassable in winter and spring, the farmer will suffer in the quality of his living. He pays in the form of a lower manner of living the price for poor conditions of getting to and from good stores and good institutions. The encouraging aspect of the rural highway situation is that improved highways are fast coming, and that the farmer is utilizing his new opportunity and apparently greatly improving his buying ability.

A third factor, and one not to be lightly disposed of, is the inertia, so to speak, of a standard of living—the tendency to continue a mode of life through sheer custom. The psychological and even physical adjustment of a family to a certain type of food, clothing, housing, education, church facility, medical facility, are not easy of change, even though it be to improve them. Low standards tend to perpetuate themselves. High standards likewise tend to survive the obstacle of an impaired income. Families accustomed to good clothes,

good house-furnishings, education, will sacrifice much to maintain the standard. Here is where special difficulty arises when a whole community is accustomed to a low standard in some one respect, education, for example. The past overawes and hypnotizes. A near upheaval is required to crack open the old custom. An encouraging phenomenon of our day is the presence in rural counties of persons whose official business it is to enter rural communities in a friendly way and break the silence of custom. A home demonstration agent's quiet voice of invitation to a new idea is like a sound that breaks the reverie of a person and starts him from his dream into action or new thinking.

It will be pardoned, I am sure, if mention is made of a fourth factor bearing upon the maintenance of a certain level of living on farms. Farmers have *par excellence* a high standard of life in the conditions of space for the family, air, sunlight, quiet, freedom from the shocks of a congested population. These high conditions of life are sometimes called "rural." City people have high conditions of life in respect to associations and institutions. These are called "urban." The notion then prevails that certain standards of life, being "rural," cannot be had by city people, and that other standards, being "urban," are not for farm people. This idea, fixed in the minds of city people, keeps them from seeking earnestly to procure for their families the high rural conditions; and, no less, the fixed idea that certain advantages of the city are urban becomes a check upon farm people, preventing them from a vigorous attempt to procure these high city conditions

of life. "Aping city ways" is the expression of this attitude. Being a "rube" is the city man's counter-attitude. The fact is that these concepts of what befits a farm family and what befits a city family were formed when frontier and pioneer conditions prevailed. These prejudices have run over into an age when the two attitudes no longer hold true to the new situations. The old idea was that farmers should work, not play. City people might have holidays, short hours of work, leisure; but farm people should be ashamed to be idle when there was so much to do and so much left undone. On the other hand, city people, it is felt, must live close in, near to the heart of business. They may not move out into the country and live as royally as farmers, while pursuing their occupations in town. These two obsessions stand as barriers to a high standard of living, barriers to be swept away.

A New American Farm Family Standard

There is evidence that the American farmer is creating for his family and community a new standard of living. One straw pointing the way of the new wind is the modern farm-house, equipped with modern bath-room, hot and cold running water, modern sewage disposal, gas or electric light and power for washing, a well kept lawn, and some palings, psychological or otherwise, inclosing the house and shutting it off from farm work, farm buildings, and farm animals. In a very real sense the "modernized" house is a housing standard that relates to the kitchen and woman's work, to the care of children, to the comfort of the man. No single factor,

probably, is so influential in attaining a high all-round standard of living.

The vehicle for family use is another clear mark of the farmer's new step up in living. The American farm family lays claim to motor vehicles for every-day use in the family. Though it is an urban piece of equipment, no one accuses the farmer nowadays of "aping the city" when he comes to town in a high-powered motor-car.

The consolidated school is another definite advance in living. There is now no quibble over the idea. It is accepted among farmers. Not that it is yet the prevailing type of school, but it is there and needs no special defense.

The day when the farm family will cease to be discussed as a queer species of people requiring conditions of life and standards of living a little lower than other people is already in its forenoon.

CHAPTER IV

SOME PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT FARM WOMEN

WHEN American farm life passes from frontierism to modernism women will be found leading the movement. If the passing is dramatic, spectacular, wonderful, they will furnish the action and the surprise. The place of the farm woman in the development of rural life is of such a key nature, therefore, that it is well worth our while to pay some attention to a few special problems which confront her.

Shortening the Work Day and Gaining Some Free Time

The long work day on the American farm has been the source of much unfavorable comment from both urban and rural sources. The fourteen-, fifteen-, or sixteen-hour day stands as an archaism in American life. The fight of the industrial worker for an eight-hour day has nearly been successful. The seven-hour day in government service, the six- or seven-hour bank and professional service day, all raise in the mind of people a serious question about the necessity of the proverbially long day. It is not only the farm laborer who hates the farm lantern. It is the growing boy on

the farm. It is the farm girl. And it is the farmer himself. But it is especially, perhaps, the farm woman. She must be up in the morning, and she must tuck everybody in bed at night. So long as anybody on the farm is at work, she is at work, too. It seems to fall now to the lot of the woman on the farm to find a way for everybody to do the tasks of the farm in shorter time. How can she go about it? How can she hope to do what nobody has yet done—devise a plan which shall provide for all the things that must be done, and yet do all in a shorter time? Let us face this matter squarely.

It should be remembered that the desultory work day gave place in the course of civil organization to the regular fixed work day as a result of thought, coördination, and adjustment. It was a civilizing step. It cost something. Somebody had to give up a habit not only, but doubtless also some special privileges. The modern industrial day has been shortened through a succession of steps made possible, not only by struggle, demand, and force, but also by ingenuity, by trial, by venture, by reorganization. In this process, somebody always solemnly averred that the "impossible" was attempted. No one involved as employer with any system of work days could see the possibility of shorter days, until forced to think the matter through. When force brought serious consideration, then light began to shine through the problem.

Who shall force through the shorter farm day? If farm labor ever unionizes successfully, it is possible that labor will be the battering-ram. But this way seems a

long distance off. We come back to the woman. She has always felt the goading prick of the work day. It has driven her when it has driven anybody. Let her first of all take comfort in the fact that the farm day problem must come up and must be solved sooner or later, and that the time is now at hand.

The distribution of the woman's time among her own tasks day after day, year in and year out, is matter of habit, come down to her by tradition from mothers and grandmothers of many generations. These tasks have, in all probability, taken the form of involuntary, almost automatic, sequence. A change in routine comes like a jar or jolt, bringing a sense of new trouble. The tasks are normal. They seem right. They have never been brought into serious question. Here is where the farm woman can learn a lesson suggested by the keeping of accounts of money expenditures. One aspect of the value of keeping a record of the expenditure of all the money one has passing through his fingers is that this record will form a basis for criticizing the expenditures of the year and will bring about an improvement or saving for next year.

The fact is that the farm woman has as an asset a day twenty-four hours long, day after day, for a year. This twenty-four-hour period must be distributed wisely among certain demands and expended wisely upon each of these demands. So many hours for sleep; the working remnant of hours distributed among certain types of household tasks, personal matters, social duties outside of the household, and other necessary or desired activities. If custom and desultory circumstance con-

trol the distribution of this time, then the woman is in the same position with regard to the utilization of her precious twenty-four hours as is the person who never keeps account of his money expenditures. The probability is that the establishment of a system of records of the expenditure of her time in such fashion as will show the distribution of her day among the duties, tasks, and pleasures that are her lot will enable her to improve upon her scheme of distribution and expenditure of time with something of the same certainty with which accounts have improved business of all sorts.

Let us describe a method of accounting of the farm woman's day and year, and set it up as a proposal for all farm women, a first step in shortening the work day and giving the woman longer spaces of leisure.

Let us arbitrarily divide the woman's activities during her waking hours into five classes: free time, work with and for children, farm work, preparing meals, other housework. Let the free time be considered time free from routine work, left to her for personal matters, rest, reading, visiting, going to town, and the like. Some other classification may do just as well, if so be that it brings to the fore activities which one feels like scrutinizing closely to see how much time is consumed on them. Whatever the number of classes and the sorts of activities, it remains to make a daily record, first, of the amount of time expended in each activity, and, second, just at what point in the day this time was so expended.

This leads up to the record sheet. Every day will have its sheet. This sheet will take form to fit the mind

of the worker. Several devices are possible. In all these devices appear the numbers of the clock hours consecutively, from 4 A. M. to 10 P. M., for example. If these numbers are in a line from top to bottom, the A. M. hours being at the top following one another down to 12 noon, these followed by the P. M. hours, then lines across the sheet may be drawn so as to give space between two lines for every hour of this waking day. Lines may be drawn lengthwise of the sheet dividing the sheet into four long spaces. The sheet will then appear checkered, and the 4 A. M. hour will have four spaces, and every other hour four spaces likewise. The record will be made in these checkered spaces. Each such space will be a fifteen-minute space, four spaces making up the hour. Let us give each of the five activities of the woman's waking day a number, as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; or a letter, as a, b, c, d, e, f. If "preparing meals" is 4 and it takes all the hour between 11 A. M. and 12 noon to prepare the noon meal, then 4 will go in each of the four spaces that lie between 11 A. M. and noon. In like manner every space on the record sheet will be filled with its appropriate number or letter.

Just when the record will be made on the sheet will, after a while, become a matter of easy decision. It doubtless will need at first to be done twice a day at least; after a while, once, at the end of the day. When the records have been kept for a month—for example, the month of January—then the second part of the method comes into play, namely, to make graphic or quickly visible the results of the records made day by day.

The graphic record of a month can be made by the daughter who is in school and who likes to show her craft in colors and neat designs. She can take a sheet of letter-paper eight by ten and a half inches, and rule it into thirty-one quarter-inch columns, a column for each day in the month. The hours of the day will appear at even intervals on the left-hand margin, beginning with 4 A. M. and ending with 10 P. M. The daughter will, in the next place, translate the daily records of her mother into colors on this sheet. Each of the five activities will have its color. Colored pencils will do. The right color, then, will be used in each day column for as many fifteen-minute spaces, and at the proper point in the column as each record warrants. When the colors are all put in, then the color chart for January will show at a glance just where the work activities came, and where the free time and leisure. It will become possible, then, to experiment with the following month, to see whether a better distribution of work and leisure can be made. As the records are kept for each month, and the charts are made, month by month, the monthly charts covering the year can be pasted neatly together edge to edge upon a long strip of heavy paper and pinned on the wall for the careful scrutiny of the entire family. Here will begin, then, comparison and resultant thinking which will reconstruct the mother's use of her time.

It is possible, let us hope, that a year's records of the housewife's waking time put into colors will have persuaded the father farmer to keep similar records for a year of his own activities and free time. The daughter or a son can assist the father, and make a year's color

chart to set up alongside the mother's chart. The study of the two charts together will furnish unequaled material for reconstructing work activities, length of day, and length of free time for other things than labor.

Economics of the Woman's Garden

Every farm woman has space for a home garden—space, let us assert, for an adequate home garden, too, whether she has a garden or not. It is with this possible space and its economic utilization that her problem at this point is concerned. This problem in many respects is similar to her husband's economic problem of the disposition of his farm space to such purpose as shall pay him. He has choices, several at many points. He must figure out his best choice or set of choices, "all things considered." So the farm woman must reckon out the best utilization of her possible space, "all things considered."

"All things considered" is a good place to begin the thinking. That her own mother used to do so-and-so in the garden is not "considering all things" far enough. Times have changed a little. She knows more now about the need of certain food elements for her family than did her mother or grandmother. A reconsideration of the whole garden space and garden enterprise, as if it were a new feature in the family, will pay many a housewife. The thoughtful designing of an adequate garden, bringing into play the assistance of the present-day experts on growing various products and the experts on the respective values of certain nourishing foods will give the housewife a new intellectual interest in an enterprise that is as old as man.

It is not the purpose of this discussion to give any technical advice on gardening itself, but only to raise to the dignity of a worthy vital problem the economic management of the available garden space. The difference between an unplanned, neglected, little-valued garden and one upon which thinking, designing, love, and personal interest, not to say pride and esthetic delight, have been lavished, in so wide that the money value of the latter in the family budget may easily be the saving factor of the year. In these times of troublous adjustment to stabilized farm conditions, if the farm woman's garden can supply from fifty to two hundred dollars' worth of fresh vegetables and fruits with regularity through the year, instead of from ten to fifty dollars' worth, as is more nearly the present case, the woman may really save the day. It is hard to exaggerate the money value of a fine garden. But the money value is by no means the only important value. The family need, the family growth into normal health, is the desideratum which outvalues the money; for the point is that without such a garden the necessary garden elements cannot usually be had at any price.

There is, however, a third value in the scientifically designed and cultivated farm garden which must not be put in the shadow by its money value and health value. This is the intellectual and esthetic value of a beautiful garden. As an adjunct of the home, the wonderful farm garden can help give that air of satisfying contentment to the home itself for which there is no substitute nor any compensation.

The routine of housework is broken by the fresh won-

ders of a beautiful productive garden. The children are early brought into appreciation of the finer skills of crop raising. It is a refining influence upon all in the home. It is a little laboratory of scientific management that will work its way into the management of the farm.

If objection is made that the garden is too large to handle with care, nicety, and beauty, then arises the possibility of large production upon a smaller plot of garden tended with skill and affection. The neglected, overrun garden that accompanies many a farm-house is one of the sad sights in the American country-side. It takes more than the spring fever of planting to make a wonderful garden and sustain it splendidly till winter comes. It requires the element of a fine thought, an unveering quality of thought, to accomplish this thing. So commonplace is the garden! How the farmer sees over it, around it, under it—but never sees it with his "fine thought"! The farm woman's fine thought will do it.

Planned in winter. Talked over, thought over, in the hours around the winter fire. But in the same class with precious purposes long brooded over, the garden will come out in a startlingly beautiful form as a result.

Six million farms. Six million gardens. Six million gardens engineered next year with a fine thought, a loving, intelligent, beautiful care. Was there sixty million dollars' worth of produce last year in these gardens? Next year there may be three hundred millions. American home economics, the science of home management, has before it the chance of helping to create the beautiful, wonderful farm garden of the future, which will

mark a very decided step upward from the frontier type of living.

Combating Dirt

Civilization has always fought dirt. The frontier has to yield to dirt more than it would like. Any climb up from frontier conditions has been a climb from dirt to less dirt. Dirt and filth when uncombated lead quickly to squalor and loss of morale. It is the woman, in domestic matters, at least, who has always led the fight against dirt, and upon her shoulders will probably always fall this task. The farm woman has among modern women an especially difficult dirt problem. There are two very general reasons for this. One reason is the nature of farming as an occupation. The farmer works so much in contact with soil that the dusty, muddy elements of the soil cling to his hands, face, feet, and clothes, and become dirt and dirt particles when brought into the vicinity of the house and home. The second reason is that town and city life has, under the guidance of its ideals of cleanliness, provided for both men and women better appliances and facilities for fighting dirt. The problem of dirt, therefore, is a major one for farm women, and it may help us, in thinking this problem out, to pass slowly through our minds some of the special phases of the dirt problem.

There is a fight to keep dirt out of the house and to maintain a clean, healthful, sweet abiding-place. Men and boys especially, but also children and all members of the family, go into the house from time to time direct from contact with soil, barn, barn-yard, crops,

animals, and machines. The problem here is first of all one with tradition, custom of the frontier. What has been done by men under the spur of necessity may have been carried over in practice to a time when the necessity no longer exists.

The wash-up room and change-of-clothes room, either in the house itself or in some other building, is the usual contrivance to stem the tide of dirt at the outer portal. This is not so difficult to achieve. In summer, washing up out of doors or on a back veranda is common, and no protest is uttered. A more serious intrusion into the habits of the man and boy is the exclusion of work boots and shoes from the inner precincts of the house and the change in the wash-room from outer work clothes to house clothes. This shift meets the protest of the masculine. It avails little to cite the customs of clean Japan. The man falls back on American farm custom. Here is where the ideal will need planting firmly by the woman.

When the woman has the cheerful coöperation of the men in keeping a clean house, she still has the usual problem of house-cleaning; and here her insistence upon modern tools and appliances for easing the labor of cleaning will be required.

The fight on dirt must next be carried to the family vehicles, whether wagon, carriage, or automobile. It is no easy matter to have a carriage or automobile clean on the inside so that the family will have no fear for best clothes. The automobile is the house in transit. The captaincy of the woman rules here, and she may well fly her flag when the family, dressed for church,

picnic, or a visit, step in. To uphold a parlor ideal or a sitting-room-furniture ideal with respect to the automobile may overturn tradition. But the ideal can be upheld when the fight on dirt is waged with spirit and intelligence.

Woman, time out of mind, has had her combat with the dirt in clothes. Some of her severest strains have been involved in this struggle. Modern invention has made possible through the power washing-machine a great alleviation of the struggle. There is still hope in the coöperative laundry for farm women. The cooperative wet-wash laundry would take a great load off her shoulders. Even, however, with these aids to the ideal of clean clothes, the idea of proper clothes for the men—uniforms for grades of work, they might be considered—in the interest of fewer very dirty clothes, will never come into farm fashion until established in the minds and customs of the men.

Clean bodies, an ideal that the frontier wash-tub enforced, centralized the fight of the woman against dirt in the house. A bathing room, with a modern bath-tub or shower-bath or both, is the answer here. It requires some ingenuity to find a place where this room can be made in a house handed down, let us say, for two generations. To lead the opinion of the home up to running hot water and finally to bathing facilities will require a deal of overcoming of habit, custom, spurious economy.

One phase of the combat against body dirt is the special struggle to keep clean hands. It is not throwing oneself open to the charge of a manicured hyper-refinement to plainly bring forward the issue of a house policy

on clean hands. The farmer is not the only man who works at dirty jobs with his hands. The chemist, the photographer, the skilled worker in metals, the electrician, the artisan, the railroad engineer, a vast array of men in modern life work in dirty materials with their hands. How do they manage the problem of clean hands? Where possible they protect their hands, doing this in many ways. A study of the question of protection of the hands not only against dirt but against the friction that makes the farmer "horny-handed" will come within the field of the farm woman who is using her mentality in the home.

There is truth in the idea that a visible committal to cleanness outside of the home will help every fight for cleanness within. And here is where the yard, the home yard, the immediate space about the house—sometimes spoken of as the lawn, front lawn, back lawn, side lawn—comes into view. A clean environment from the house walls for a few yards or rods in all directions will immensely help in keeping the house clean and will assist in the whole combat with dirt. Cement walks from every house door to the various buildings used helps the idea further. A yard all about the house kept sacred from the intrusion of animals, machines, trash, litter, will be a sign and signal of the cleanness ideal. Keeping dirt off the yard warns everybody that the home is one where dirt is an enemy as much as vermin. It is remarkable how a definite line that shows distinctly where the yard begins and dirt ends aids the general idea. This line may be a fence, a hedge, a coping, or a wall, a line of bushes or trees;

but in its simplest form it may be only a neatly edged sod in a graceful line. The human mind responds to these little devices. They are tricks in the trade of policing, the "thus far and no farther."

The advance of the farm home and the farm occupation from pioneer conditions to modern standards should be taken without leaving a stigma upon the lower level outlived and left behind. No one is to be criticized for the frontier. Farming is not "on the green carpet." The farm home is not under fire, either as it is now or as it has been at any time. The questions and problems that confront farm women are just such as farm women are aiming at all over America. Our discussion lays emphasis only on systematizing the efforts to attain these ends.

The shorter day carrying more leisure, the beautiful garden bringing health and economy, the clean house and home, are the aims of farm women; and everybody bids them God-speed.

CHAPTER V

WHERE THE FARM FAMILY TRADES

WHERE does the farmer trade? Do you know? And could you describe the place or places, so that any one else would know? Why does he trade there? What does it mean in family life and community life for the farmer to trade where he does? Is there a better place to trade? How could the farmer and his family have a better trading place and better trading facilities? Will this come to pass? Are there any evidences, any straws pointing? Who will make the first move? If we can answer half these questions, we shall do well.

Few writers on the human aspects of farming and farm life give time and consideration to the farmer's family purchases. Buying things is so easy a matter in Boston, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, if one has the money or credit to buy with, that the question whether the farmer can buy what he wants even when he has the money is naturally overlooked. It is therefore necessary to spend a little time on the part that the goods such as a family usually purchases play in life, and in farm life particularly. We need not take up every article. Perhaps clothes, house-furnishings, and dentistry will answer our purpose. Here are items

that make up about twenty per cent of a family budget. Dentistry, a skilled service with a modicum of actual goods, is a sample of several of the satisfactions of family wants that the farmer, if he has the service, must purchase.

Let us put the question direct: How important in life, in American life to be definite, is it to have accessible at all times a place where all kinds of the clothing necessary for a family can be purchased? All the kinds, let us go on to say, which the ingenuity and experience of the clothing-makers have made possible; and, let us hasten to add, all the kinds of clothes, selected by the skill and advice of the clothing agents from whom the ultimate consumer buys? A place easy to reach. Goods of wide variety. Skilled, trusted agents of trade. When one wants clothes, to be able at that moment to get them. When one wants the best that one's money should buy, to be able to have a wise, skilled agent who knows clothes, knows the markets where they may be gathered from, knows the wants of his customer, and knows how to let his customer hear about them. Everybody knows that these are the conditions for being well dressed. Everybody knows that with money to pay for clothes, but with no chance to get a variety of clothes, with no skill or particular intelligence about clothes on the part of the agent, we have the conditions for being poorly dressed. If clothes make the man, or even help to make the man, being able to be well dressed according to one's means is a large part of living facilities.

House-furnishings and furniture are like clothes. They give the air of home, of station, of class, that every

one seeks, not to impress the stranger but for the family itself. The difference between a good house and a poor house is often a difference on the inside, in the furnishings. To be near the best, to see variety, to know that one is well advised, is to be well housed.

If accessible facilities for securing good clothes and house-furnishings mean so much, it cannot be doubted that accessibility to good dentistry helps to make a presentable and happy family. The teeth are small members of the human body, but they play a great rôle in health and comfort. Old age is staved off by the good dentist. But if one cannot reach the dentist? Ah, there 's the rub. At any rate, it is these very practical matters that face us in the trade problem.

Only a glance is needed at trade and merchandising conditions in our cities ranging from twenty-five thousand population upward to see what advantage city people have in their clothing stores. City people have the pick of the world's clothes at their doors. They can fit their purchases to their purses. They have at their service the skill of men and women who know special kinds of clothes. A shoe man knows shoes. He knows the foot, its ailments, its weaknesses. He fits the foot, and one depends upon his knowledge. The purchase involves a purchase of the dealer's skill. The dress-goods dealer tells the purchaser about goods, helps select, knows styles, and has judgment. The city woman comes to rely upon this judgment. The outcome is that the city man and woman have at their command, in buying clothes, furniture, books, instruments of music, everything that goes to make up a

home, the trained intelligence of specialists who are accessible at a moment's notice, who have the goods, and who cheerfully fill their customer's needs.

It is very pertinent as a part of the general rural problem to scan the farmer's trade opportunities, to see whether there is any disparity between him and his city brother in getting commodities, skills, and services.

Incomplete Aggregations of Trade Agencies

Where does the farmer trade? In country cross-roads general stores; in little hamlets possessing two or three competitive stores of the same general type; in villages containing more stores than the hamlet, but stores still very general and competitive in some lines at least; in towns that begin to specialize; in small cities; in large cities; in large cities by mail.

If one had to answer in one word, he would say "villages." If he had four words, "country stores and villages." But these words do not give the picture. It is a difficult one to portray. However, we shall try.

Leaving aside the difference between regions in the United States, and there are some wide differences, to be sure, the first thing we must put into the picture is this outstanding fact: every farm family goes, yes, has to go, to several trade centers miles apart in order to get the variety and the grades of goods and services it desires.

The farmer may utilize a cross-roads general store for a few standard groceries, a few items of clothing, some knickknacks, kitchen-ware, a few farm supplies.

The mile to the cross-roads store stands in his mind over against five miles to a village. He may accept an article he does not want, rather than go to the village. If a commodity is not in the country store, it may turn out not to be carried in the nearest village; to some other village, then, the farmer must go. It is not unusual to have trade so divided and scattered among villages that a farm family will go to one village for feed, to another for farm implements, to a third for banking, to a fourth for freight; all this besides going occasionally to a larger town or city for an infrequent purchase. Whatever the frontier condition may have been that justified these village collections of merchandise, it is certainly in order now for some one to look over the situation for an alleviation. It is evident at a glance that the American farm family is still the victim of an unorganized merchandising system. For the farmer to be compelled to go from village to village to satisfy his wants or to do without commodities and services, presents a case of heedless perpetuation of the frontier.

A whole group of villages may not carry some varieties of goods at all. What stocks there are may be very incomplete. The result is that the farmer is placed so that he cannot easily get what he would like and can pay for, but must accept substitutes or go without. This situation would be intolerable for a city man. The farm family accepts the handicap, carries the burden, becomes accustomed to the sacrifice, and suffers the penalty, presumably, of a standard of living lower than it can afford.

Inadequate Merchandising Methods

The farmer's agencies of trade in the general store of the country cross-roads type, and in the villages lying about his farm, are deficient on the whole in their methods of merchandising. This deficiency is probably defensible under the circumstances, but the farmer is the victim. The goods cannot be handled, stored, displayed, and distributed over the counter with necessary care and intelligent adaptation. The volume of business is not large enough for a single unit to warrant the minute attention to detail required in modern merchandising. Variety prevails without a discriminating meeting of high-class needs. One mind, one pair of hands, cannot attend to the wants with proper care. The information afforded to the buyer through modern advertising is not possible in one of these small units. The farmer becomes accustomed to low-grade handling of goods, and accepts it, not knowing how to do better. He sees the difference when he goes to the city store, but he comes to think that city people can have such methods but that the farmer cannot. He does not know the reason why the farmer's store is as it is, and the storekeeper usually lets it go at that. The public generally does not care. They come to feel that the village is a crude business unit because the customers are farmers. Farming and farmers get the blame for unorganized selling methods in village and small town. There is no benevolent dictator to enter upon the scene and change things. So the inertia prevails, waiting until the moment when illumination shall come.

Supplementary Trading Towns and Cities

The farm family, it is well known, leaves the villages on one side and travels to the large town and to the city on certain periodic occasions at rather long intervals for certain goods and services. People dwelling in cities do the same thing. The annual or semiannual trip to look over some very special piece of clothing, vehicle, implement, or to get the advice and skill of some famous specialist on the eye, ear, nose, throat, or some other organ of life, is in a class by itself. This city trade, in which the farmer has some share, should not be thought of as in any way an offset for his inadequate local trade facilities. It should, in fact, be kept apart and not confused with his regular day by day, week by week, opportunities.

This is the place to mention also the farmer's trade by mail, the so-called mail-order trade in the big cities. To mention this type of trade raises many questions, which need not detain us, however. Cannot the farmer get along without village trade when the mail-order houses become general? Is the mail-order house responsible for inadequate village merchandising? We must call attention to the fact that the customer of the mail-order house is not the farm family alone but the village, town, and city family. The problem, if there is a problem here, is not a farmer problem but a human problem. Farmers cannot be blamed if they find the mail-order house more satisfactory than the village store. The one village store may not be able to change its methods; but this is not to say that the village system of trade is not

susceptible of reorganization in such wise as to make the mail-order business unprofitable and unnecessary.

The Problem of Farmer Trade

The problem of trade for farmers, boldly put without softening the blow in respect to the feelings of anybody concerned, is how the farm family is to come into possession of one complete adequate local trade center. We may leave out of account as a minor consideration the present or future opportunity for the farmer to trade in the large city. The heart of the problem, and it is a massive problem, is one of consolidating the various trade agencies of any one group of farmers—country stores, hamlets, villages—into one "smashing good" farmers' town. "Consolidation" is no new solution for farmers' problems. "Consolidation" in selling products of farms goes under the title of "coöperation." It has common sense back of it. It has good economic doctrine inside of it. It has many friends among statesmen and some friends among the farmers themselves. And this type of consolidation is winning its way slowly. Consolidation of churches has been a well accredited policy put forward for remedying the oversupply of small, inadequate churches. Church specialists believe in it. Sociologists believe in it. It is difficult, very difficult, to effect, but it is increasing, nevertheless. Consolidation of rural schools is the best known type of overcoming the unorganized, scattered, small-scale rural institution. Consolidation of small country schools into large adequate schools with enough "volume of business" to insure good teachers, grades, effective peda-

gogy, has come to stay in rural America. It has found its way into the law of the States and has commended itself to the conscience and good sense of thinking people. Why may we not have the consolidation of trade hamlets and villages into a smart town that may be an object of pride?

The obstacles loom big. The small obstacles are big enough. But the big one? It is that in America freedom to trade, freedom to set up stores, is a sacred privilege that cannot be interfered with or conspired against. Schools may be forced to consolidate by law, but stores never. Villages may be killed by railways a mile away. Villages may die of dry rot. Villages may be allowed to impose the burden of their competition and ineffectiveness upon five thousand farm people and kill the progress of living. But we know of no American way, other than by slow death, of controlling such a trade unit as a village so as to consolidate it with other trade units. There is this to say, that no one has seriously thought of any plan to effect consolidation of these small collective units. Everybody has taken for granted that a village once become a village is thereby as immune from deliberate elimination as a human being. Let us consider a few possible ways of working out the problem of a model farmers' town, as a substitute for many little trade places.

Some Suggestions on the Problem

There are various parties who have a vital interest in creating a good farmers' town. First, there is the farm population, thirty million strong. There is the

whole manufacturing trade, which is seeking an increased domestic market for American-made goods. There is the wholesale and jobbing trade, which wants a quick turn-over and a steady movement of goods. Here are three strong parties whose every interest favors a more facile distribution of commodities than now obtains. It is not necessary to list the opponents. Custom and tradition endow them with inordinate power, however few or weak. If the agricultural press, backed by its manufacturing and jobbing advertisers, could carry on a ten-year drive of publicity, the farm population would begin to see clearly where to cast their weight. If the press of all manufacturing interests could join this drive of the agricultural press, and if the wholesalers and jobbers would also throw their strength into the campaign, there is no doubt about the result. It would at once be seen by the shrewd and far-seeing retail rural merchant that it behooved him to establish himself in the model farmers' town. The thing would start. And the forces of publicity would set in motion other forces that would tend to bring the result about. This is the way of control by publicity.

One other set of forces would come into play, namely, the highway forces. A farmers' town of high quality would be impracticable without a highway system radiating to the farms. This system must be planned with all the skill of engineering. Up to the present time highway popularity has been with the trunk highway, the interstate, the historic continental trail. The farmer needs a local trade highway system to support the idea of the farmers' town.

The Farmer's Town and Other Farmer Facilities

Five thousand up-to-date farmers' towns, replacing twenty-five thousand present incomplete centers of trade, would do the trick of consolidation. Five thousand terminal towns, "terminal" in the sense that a town is at the end of a railway journey for goods, each town met by a complete highway system of a community character connecting it with the twelve hundred farm homes belonging to it! This would provide consolidated, unitary farming communities to replace the present hodgepodge. Already there are twenty-five hundred of these terminal towns ready to take up the responsibility of furnishing their farmers with trade facilities, if the small competitors were eliminated by consolidation. The nuclei of the other twenty-five hundred exist in villages already present which will bear much enlargement and improvement. Whether rational thinking has any chance in this problem may be a question; but surely to see the problem, to see the situation as it is, will aid any rationality that is possible.

It needs only a moment's thought to see what effect a real farmers' town would have upon the problem of many other facilities, such as hospital, library, high school, entertainment. A consolidation of trade would inevitably bring about the consolidation for which every other phase of farm life is crying. Consolidation, organization, unification! This means power for farm life where power is needed. If the city could once see what buying power would be added to the farm market, the city would join hands in the long-time campaign for consolidation.

CHAPTER VI

LANDLORDS AND FARM TENANTS

NO phase of farm life is more deceptive than farm tenancy. It makes little difference whether one views it from the economic or the social side. In either case, while the farm tenants and the landlords and the land remain in plain sight and look simple in character, the system itself, the institution of tenancy in its entirety, proves strangely baffling.

Any snap judgment upon American farm tenancy taken as a whole is sure to run into a maze of embarrassments. This is true because the relations of tenant, landlord, and land partake so generously of the complications of human life itself.

When one reads that tenancy is a menace to agriculture and American institutions and should be eliminated, one surmises that the writer is likely to be of the sort to set forth on some other occasion the doctrine that marriage is a menace to the world by reason of overpopulation and should likewise be eliminated. When, on the other hand, we read a stand-pat defense of farm tenancy as it is, we know the writer has either not seen all the types and shades of tenancy which American farming can show; or else he is one of those hard-baked persons, a little overdone and scorched maybe in the

process of life, who has no place in his philosophy for melioration. The sober student of life who knows his history believes that between the extreme right and the extreme left lies the sound position of the person who holds that until a sensible substitute is offered for tenancy, agriculture will keep on trying to better the conditions under which tenancy prevails.

It is not the aim of this book to assemble and present the statistical side of farm tenancy in the United States. Nor will comparisons be attempted with European forms of land tenure. The United States Census material is very full and informing and is easily available. Books and bulletins are not wanting to make up a considerable literature upon the subject. Our purpose is to take the reader to a few vantage-points for observation and give him a broad sweep of the eye over the human side of the problem.

Landlords

Who are the landlords? What is their interest in land? How do they come to own land? How is it that they do not operate it in farming? Let us quietly look at the human side of land-owning.

1. Farmers. Active "dirt" farmers. These are landlords, because they have more land than they can operate. They may have inherited more land in one way and another than they can operate. They may have bought land, made an investment in land because it was valuable; or bought a farm for a son just married, the father becoming landlord to his son. The land-holding, active working farmer of this type, in the prime

of life, likes land, likes investment in land, feels able to cope with the responsibilities of landownership, and for a few decades is a landlord.

2. Retired farmer; the farmer who is out of the active business of farming, but who retains his farm lands for various reasons, hope of making a good sale, provision for a son or daughter, sentiment tying him to his glorious past, safe investment insuring him a living in old age. This type of landowner knows land but may not know other forms of investment. Safety is an absolute motto.

For a few years, possibly a decade or two, the retired farmer is landlord—landlord to a son or daughter, frequently.

3. Widow of a farmer who was either active or retired. The farm woman who is a widow will hold the farm for a child who is not quite grown. She is actuated by the same motives as actuated the man. A daughter may inherit a farm and, wishing to hold the investment, will lease it. Sentiment may determine holding it for years. A son, likewise, may inherit while following another occupation. He may keep the farm as an investment or plaything. There is something in landed property that is enticing to the mind. A farm owned by a city man is a title to respect. It carries weight, with oneself, especially.

4. The country gentleman, a man belonging to the line of landed aristocracy. He lives in the country at least a part of the year in a pretentious country house, or he lives in a plantation in sight of many tracts or units of land. He likes to see land blooming. He likes

to see the workers in the fields, the horses and mules, the cattle, the country children. He likes the rural *ensemble,* and so lives where he does, and yet lets the other man operate his lands. He may have other business in town; very likely he does have. He is a man of affairs. He enjoys sports of the open, the riding-horse, the gun, dogs. He is of the English type. Land fills out his personality. He needs it as an adornment to his career.

5. The capitalist, the land capitalist, a man who knows how to make money out of land and other men's labor, while he is sitting in town and doing other things, also. Land rented out for a year under contract is earning money for the landlord while he sits, sleeps, or smokes and dozes. In this respect it is like money lent out under contract. It needs little attention during the year. The man, therefore, who owns land and likes it, knows land workers and can judge them, this man is suited to be a land capitalist.

6. The speculator in land. The man who, like the land capitalist, is a judge of land and land values and knows the ins and outs of land titles, but who, wishing to make his money by sale, may have to keep a string of farms on hand, operated meantime by tenants, every farm, however, awaiting a buyer.

7. There are other landlords, lenders of money on farm mortgages, compelled, after a trial, to take over the farms. These are landlords against their will.

Landlords, in general, are of two broad classes: first, permanent landlords, who choose the function or hold the function voluntarily and plan no cessation of it;

second, temporary landlords, who are landlords by necessity or as a convenience, while seeking a cessation of the landlord function.

Kinds of Tenants

Who are the tenants? How do they come to choose the tenant relation and offer to carry out the tenant function? Why do they not own land, if possible? Are there conditions in their lives and histories which bring compulsion to bear, forcing them to be tenants? Let us look these classes over and attempt to understand with sympathy and imagination their condition of life and their relation to land.

1. The man or woman related to the landlord, as son, daughter, nephew, niece, grandson, granddaughter, or brother or sister—usually, however, a son or daughter. The young man has no land, has perhaps very little property yet in his own right. His wife may have some little property by gift or inheritance. The farmer knows his son and trusts him as a farmer, and so contracts with him for the operation of a farm. The terms are frankly less difficult and exacting than with a stranger, simply because two functions coincide; namely, the father-and-son relation, which carries a presumption of inheritance and necessary assistance either of the father to the son or, indeed, of the son to the father; and the tenant-and-landlord relation and set of functions. The tenant function, blending with the son function, produces a unique type of land tenure. In fact, this type is a *modus vivendi et operandi* in the interim between landlessness and inheritance of land on

the part of the son. In like manner the blood tie, whatever the relationship, comes in to modify the tenure functions.

2. The man or woman unrelated to the landlord, but a son or daughter of a land-owning neighbor. This type has some of the features of the "related tenant." Looked at closely it will be seen that the father of the tenant who is a neighbor to the landlord is in a sense sponsor, indorser, and backer of the tenant. The willingness of the landlord to make terms and the liberality of the terms themselves are colored by the neighbor relation. The father's character, ability, and interest in his son or daughter are invaluable capital for the son and commend him to the landlord. In this situation, the tenant has the assistance or the potential assistance of the father of a character like that possessed by the related tenant; and this backing is taken into account by the landlord. The neighbor relation, moreover, blends with the landlord-tenant relation and function, in the same manner as the son-and-father relation in the case of the related tenant. These two types of tenants are the privileged and highly favored ones.

3. The landless young farmer entirely "on his own," with no backer, no assisting family connections. He may have been a wage-worker until his age, experience, and small accumulated capital warranted his attempt to operate land. In place of a monetary "send-off" from the father or father-in-law, this type of young man had to take time to earn it. He takes to land by his bringing up. The natural turn when he comes to years of labor is farm work, and the natural step from wage

work is the management of a farm under the tenant contract. This is a large class of the tenants and has several subdivisions, according as the character and ability and opportunity of the tenant varies. The major part of these young tenants struggling alone are looking ahead to owning land by means of an accumulated surplus. They are the climbers on the ladder of tenancy. Ownership is at the top. Some make the top quickly. Some make it eventually after a hard climb. Some come close to the top, but fail because of the prolongation of the period until strength fails. The rest never come near the top, but remain static as tenants, or perchance drop back to the wage-earning class. The perpetually landless man is here. Here belongs the unfortunate, the poverty-menaced family. Here is the marginal man, who with the pathos of struggle has attained some height and is always fearful of a fall. Rise and fall and rise again, may be the lot of some.

4. The tenant capitalist. The man who knows how to operate land by the tenancy route to a profit. The man who would rather be tenant than landlord, who would very much rather rent than own the land he operates. The man who could own, but who believes that the amount of money which he would in a sense sink if he invested in ownership of land, when put into operating capital on somebody else's land, will give him a handsome profit. This man has no sentiment for ownership. Farming is a money-making proposition, and the interesting thing to note is that there is a type of man who can make a profit out of a relation and

business function which is customarily regarded as an opportunity of a second or third class.

The Function of the Landlord

An analysis of the responsibilities and activities of a normal land-owning farm operator may help us think out the problem of landlords and tenants and throw some light on the system of tenancy itself. In his capacity as owner of his farm the farmer assumes certain responsibilities, burdens, risks, duties—in fact, the functions of ownership. In his capacity of operator, the farmer who owns his farm-land assumes other tasks, risks, burdens, activities, responsibilities, or, in summary, the functions of operating the farm. It is because these two relations are so separable in practice that we are faced with the problem in a situation where the two functions belong to two separate persons rather than to one.

Let us turn our attention for a moment to the function of land-owning in and by itself, apart from the function of land operation. What are some of the items that go to make up this function? We shall no more than illustrate this angle of understanding the problem, leaving completer consideration for future treatment.

First, capital and, possibly, credit are provided, and both are risked in the selection and developing of the landed property and in carrying the stated charges of taxes and costs. This provision, this risk, the owner of the land takes, and it becomes his function as owner. Certain secondary functions he takes upon himself as

owner, for example, when he helps to fix the margins of economic production by his choices, when he helps to bring demand into adjustment with conditions, when he helps to fix the order of utility production, when he presses toward a higher surplus-producing régime. This is not the end of his function as owner. He may have to use his credit as owner to make up some deficits in his rôle as worker; his interest as owner and large risk-taker may induce him to improve the quality of his product and to reduce costs of operation which fall upon the land; he may as the tax-bearer and protector of the values in his land engage in special efforts for the permanent good of the community.

These various activities grow immediately out of the landowner's continuing interest in his land investment, and they will be the same whether he operates the land himself or leases his land to a tenant to operate. These items may be considered, therefore, as the basic function of the landlord, and the landlord function may be looked upon as a contract which somebody—and somebody who is able—will have to meet. So an owner operator is landlord to himself. A tenant operator has another person performing the landlord functions.

If the landlord functions are constant, no matter who owns or operates the land, then, in any plan of a private or governmental character to modify or do away with the tenancy system, provision must be made for carrying on these functions. It will not pass economic muster if a plan is floated that sets a type of man up as an owner who is, in the nature of the case, unable to function as a landlord to himself.

The Function of the Tenant

The owner of land, if he operates the land in his capacity of operator, land worker, and crop producer, has certain activities and responsibilities, which may be termed the function of the operator. As a man on the job, he assumes the task of labor and the risk attending the life of a worker in matters of health, strength, staying powers; he risks the value attached to his managerial ability and his man-labor, as he applies these to the particular land and farm lay-out; he furnishes and risks certain capital equipment in machinery and horse-power and in live stock. Without going further into the analysis of items, it is plain that the farm operator has his functions, and within these functions he has a certain scope for mental and physical powers of large caliber. These functions are constant, and as such are the same whether the worker is also owner of the farm or simply tenant. The function may therefore be used and talked about as the tenant function. Whatever system shall be called upon to supersede the tenancy system, it cannot be expected that it will do away with the tenant function.

Abuses of the Landlord and Tenant Functions

If the landlord discharges his functions perfectly, no landlord abuses arise. If the tenant fulfils his functions without a hitch, no tenant abuses occur. But it is inconceivable that abuses should not rise. It is, in the first place, hardly thinkable that farm owner-operators may not fail as landlords to themselves or

as tenants to themselves. The failure as landlord, if not met with complaint by the tenant part of his nature, may be felt by the wife or children in the household and registered there as an abuse. If abuses or failures to function normally and properly occur with the farm owner-operator in both functions or in either one, much less is it to be wondered at that landlords fail or abuse their function and that tenants fail and misuse their responsibility.

It is necessary in understanding farm tenancy to see clearly how human imperfection hedges the landlord and the tenant round and conspires with opportunity to reduce the percentage of a perfect relation. Where one landlord measures up to ninety per cent of a complete functioning, even to the extent of assisting the tenant at points of deficiency lest he should fail in the tenant function, ten landlords are likely to fall to seventy-five per cent.

The problem here is to know the pitfalls of both landlord and tenant well enough to provide against and protect each one as much as possible in lease and in law and custom. Here is where progress may be expected in America, foreseeing the causes of abuses, aiming to reduce the causes, one by one, to a minimum. If a man is incapable of performing the function of landlord to himself but can fairly well perform the functions of a farm operator, then it would be a poor gift to him to burden him with the extra function which he cannot perform. In all probability many existing owner-operators fail in their landlord function to themselves and would do better in a simple tenant function.

They illustrate what would happen if all tenants had the landlord function also.

The failures and abuses in the function of the tenant may, it is conceivable, be corrected if the function of the landlord in some way can be added to that of the tenant. It is this hope which possesses the mind of those who advocate landownership as a remedy for the failure or abuse of the tenant function, especially in cases where the failure or abuse of the landlord function on the part of the landlord coincides with the failure of the tenant function on the part of the tenant. It is believed by these advocates that ownership of small holdings of land by those now engaged in the tenant function would be an economic advance, if a sound way could be devised to finance the purchases and payments and to spread them over a long period of time. The serious nature of this proposal is not open to question. If the tenant can operate successfully a large farm owned by some one else, might he not be capable of fulfilling the landlord function on a smaller holding, even though he could not on a larger? Would production as a whole suffer if tenants were thus made into owner-operators of several small holdings? Would the advance in prestige compensate for the loss of large-scale operation? Would tenants be transformed into peasants? Would the status of the American farmer on the whole make progress? This inquiry needs an answer.

It will not escape the notice of the thoughtful person that the failure or abuses of either function in the case of actual landlords and actual tenants is part and parcel

of the situation of the power of capital on the one hand and poverty on the other. That is, abuse may occur in the landlord function growing out of a position of advantage and power on the part of the landlord. Failure may occur in the tenant, by reason of some of the many influences and effects of poverty. This situation pertains to a certain percentage of the tenants, for some are poor, in fact, very poor. Poverty is a factor in their lives; and wherever poverty comes in contact with capital, a situation which may be termed Poverty *v.* Wealth arises. What occurs is not so much a matter of land and operation of land as a matter of self-conscious poverty acting in close contact with self-conscious wealth. Where poverty-wealth behavior contravenes the operation of the tenancy function or of the landlord function, then we have a complication of pure economics. This possibly merits a fuller discussion.

Poverty and Tenancy

Granting that there are several classes of tenants who are above poverty, it cannot fail to be recognized that one unfailing source of tenants is poverty. Tenancy has throughout its history been so much associated with poverty that some people still think that all tenants are in the grasp of poverty.

The problem of poverty stares one in the face as he looks at a larger class of tenants. Their poverty modifies their behavior and is a social disease. It makes itself felt as certainly as anemia in the individual. It has to be reckoned with apart from the land con-

nection. The baffling quality here is poverty. The special land problem expands into the human problem. The basic question is this: Can poverty be stamped out by a special land policy? Can the opportunity to buy land on long time with easy payments, small interest, the added help of scientific advice at a nominal rate, transform poverty into competence? Are other forces necessary in this transformation? Is a special service required of religion, of education, of health forces, of recreation forces? Poverty is the problem of the ages, of all countries. In America, poverty floats over the farm tenant family perhaps even more than over the farm laborer. One reason is that farm tenants are married, have families; farm laborers, at least a great many of them, are single, young, independent.

Race characteristics enter the tenant problem of the United States, especially those of the negro race. Tenancy in the Southern States is complicated by both poverty and racial issues. These considerations are not named to dampen any one's ardor over a specific remedy for the failures and abuses in the functions of tenant and landlord; they are rather pointed out in order to enlist the thinking of others than economists in the problem. Economists, sociologists, moralists, social psychologists, many specialists, are involved in so complex a situation as the one created by poverty and race.

Regional differences in respect to tenants and landlords are striking, and the deadly parallel of comparison is illuminating. A composite picture of each of the various regional tenant-landlord situations would aid

any student or any theorist to balance his thinking: leases—both the letter and the practice—housing and living conditions, costs of living, regionally compared; the analysis of landlord functions as carried out in practice, compared State by State, region by region; the tenant functions compared. Such methods of viewing will help to get clues to better adjustments. The clear segregation of an abuse or a failure from its milieu of entanglements is ninety per cent of the way to a better adjustment.

By-products of Tenancy

An exhaustive understanding of landlords and tenants will discover many by-products of the whole system of farm tenancy. These resultant factors, in some cases, may turn out to be more far-reaching for good or ill than the immediate effects of tenancy upon tenants.

The failure of the landlord function toward the farm community and the county in which the farm is located, is worth looking at a moment. When the owner-operator discharges his landlord function toward his farm community or county, his public spirit is strengthened by the personal motives of a family of children to be reared to American manhood and womanhood. Human nature betrays lines of weakness when it comes to expenditures of any kind for a public enterprise that does not directly and immediately include the proposed donor. It is this fact that causes many an owner-operator to fail in his function of supporter of his community. He may have no children, or his

children may be grown; and the auxiliary motive urging him to a one hundred per cent functioning in public matters is wanting. Much more is this true when the landlord is an absentee, when his family is utterly removed from the land and community. Failure here often becomes actual abuse of the landlord function toward the community. A substitute, moreover, must be found for the family motive as a reinforcement of the function toward the community in case of the absentee landlord.

When title to land—that is, actual ownership—leaves the farm community and moves to the city and to city industry, there is another by-product of tenancy that needs most careful consideration and analysis. This situation amounts to a drainage of surplus profits, dividends, or accumulations, from the land and away from the agricultural population to cities and city industry. The seriousness of this state of affairs is hidden. It needs bold statement and candid disclosure. Surplus accumulations tend to embellish, enrich, or surround the community with comfort and refinement. A surplus will express itself in houses, not so much better ones, although they will be better, as more ample, beautiful, distinctive ones. Surplus will gradually from generation to generation manifest itself in the improved appearance of homesteads, farmsteads, but especially in institutions. Surplus gives art. Surplus brings the appliances for more pleasure. When surplus is constantly drained off to cities, the country-side is left barren. The country then is considered only as an economic implement, a tool to be kept in order,

but not a medium for the expression of human refinements.

The accompaniment of this drainage of surplus to the city is the creed and public doctrine that the city is the place for amenities, for the embodiment of the subtler and finer thoughts, through the transformation of surpluses. Is this true? Must there not be a recanvass of this creed? Is there not due to the country and the rural community an undrained-off surplus which is to be turned into beauty and meliorations for the people who sweat for bread and live there?

Here is where the tenancy system presents a problem very grave indeed. With all the rural effort for institutions and for beauty in landscape, if more and more the drainage of surplus continues through the hands of the absentee city landlord, what hope is there? England's country life has its refinements because the English landlord did build and maintain an establishment in the country. The castle or "great house," the parks, the paved roads, gave back to rural England the values of some of its surplus. If rural England is to lose its country refinements by the break-up of its estates, it will face the same situation as America has in its artless rural life.

A fresh, unbigoted review of American landlordism and tenancy, not omitting the by-products, will serve to throw light upon almost every phase of American rural life, just because its features penetrate so far into rural society and into national progress.

CHAPTER VII

AGRICULTURE AND HIGH SCHOOLS

AMERICA believes in high schools for towns and cities with the same kind of belief that she believes in elementary schools. The proof is in two facts: on the one hand the fact that virtually all towns and cities possess high schools; on the other, that every square inch of the incorporated area of such towns and cities is within some high-school district and is taxed for the support of high schools. Evidently America, however, is not yet committed so wholeheartedly to high schools for its farm people; and the proof is perhaps not so much in the fewness of rural high schools, though this fewness is startling, as in the fact that so inconsiderable a part of the land area outside of towns and cities is within high-school districts and subject to tax for high-school purposes.

This situation, clear as it is, bald as it is, staring us in the face as it does, cannot but raise in the minds of thinking citizens the question whether, from the social point of view, America, in allowing this frontier condition to hang like a mist around farm life from decade to decade, is not storing up trouble for herself. A rural social problem of high national import is involved in this contrast between urban and rural educational ideals.

The Educational Ideal of Farmers

The colonial farmer—and it will be remembered that the original colonist was in nearly every case a farmer—possessed a high educational ambition for his family. The presence in New England, from the earliest day, of the so-called academy, an institution of a private or corporate character higher than the elementary school, and in fact in instances giving some subjects of college grade, is evidence of this high educational rural ideal. The New England academy traveled with the New England farm settlers into New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

But as time went on and the racial character of the farm population changed through immigration, the rural supporters of the academy began to dwindle. Then, too, the towns and cities commenced their phenomenal growth, and the urban citizens came into control of the academic institutions; and shortly high schools, supported by tax, supplanted the private and corporate academies. Whereupon the American farmer—a far different type from the original, it must be admitted—apparently did not think it wise to go to the length of creating a high-school district and taxing his land and properties for such a school. Nor was the city keen, for some reason or other, to see high schools in the country. So it was educators who began to point out the desirability of high-school education for farm children. It was educators who asked for consolidation of elementary rural schools, and the attachment of rural high schools to these consolidated units. Under the stimulus of educational doctrine, certain progressive

farm communities in every State have created high-school districts, taxed themselves for maintenance, and come to believe as heartily in high schools for their children as city people do for city children.

Certain States, like Utah and California, by making the compulsory age of children include the eighteenth year, have set a seal of approval upon high-school education for the children of farmers as well as of other classes.

The Smith-Hughes Law, moreover, which appropriates federal money for the teaching of agriculture in schools, has been another influence of considerable power strengthening the idea of high schools for farmers. The development of agricultural science in the experiment stations of the States, and its dissemination through the extension agencies of federal and state government, has brought the best agricultural practice up to such heights that the most natural thing in the world is to teach farm boys and girls this modern science of agriculture in high school.

It has been thought by some thinkers and writers whose ideas on rural life have commanded attention and favor that the salvation of the American farm community from disintegration and decadence is to come about by the redirection and rehabilitation of the farmers' elementary schools. This view, however, has usually overlooked a fact of prime importance; namely, that children attending the elementary school, much as they may absorb from school, are too young to appreciate the kind of training that farm communities especially need in order to save them from disintegration.

In a child, however, the high-school age is the age of social awakening, the age of new ideals, the age of adaptation and adjustment to potent points of view. Much therefore as a "redirected" elementary school may contribute to a modernized country life, still it seems true that the farmer cannot emerge from frontier organization until he has incorporated the high school into his educational system.

The Farmer's High School and Grade Schools Coöperating

When high-school districts shall cover every inch of America, even as do now elementary or so-called grade-school districts, then all farmers will have control or a measure of control of some high school even as now of grade schools. Such high schools may be situated in villages, towns, or small cities, or they may be in the open country; but at all events the farmers' lands will be in the district and will be taxed for the support of the high school. Evidently also a certain number of grade schools and grade-school districts will be found within the high-school district, unless indeed the little schools have all been collected into one large grade school, even as all the children of high-school age are collected into one high school. The question at this point is, how can the high school coöperate with its own grade schools; or how, to put the matter the other way, can the grade schools coöperate with the high school?

It is not sufficient to say that the grade schools will send pupils after graduation to the high school. The

fact is, when one looks the situation in the face, the grade schools and the high school are a unit. They are the exponents of the educational ideals of the community. Grade teachers are preparing scholars for high school in about the same way as teachers within the high school teaching second-year subjects are preparing pupils for the third-year subjects. Community statesmanship will in the advanced community arrange coöperative measures between the high school on the one hand and the grade schools on the other.

Let us assume that each grade school has its board of school trustees. This board is guiding the destinies and utilizing the resources of its little district or neighborhood. But the high school also has a board which looks out from a higher vantage-point for the higher educational interests of all the little districts within its large high-school district. Could there possibly be a more rational step in coöperation than for the establishment of a voluntary (that is, non-governmental) association of school trustees including all trustees of the grade-school districts and the trustees of the high school? An instance is the "Constitution of the Association of School Trustees of the Chaffey Union High School District," Ontario, California. It has been in effective operation for several years, and is as follows:

Article I. Name.

The name of this organization shall be "The Association of School Trustees of the Chaffey Union High School District."

Article II. Membership.

Any school trustee of any district sending students to the Chaffey Union High School District or any member of the

high-school board shall be eligible to membership in the Association. The County Superintendent shall be an ex-officio member. School principals shall be associate members.

Article III. Officers.

The officers of this association shall consist of President, Vice-President and Secretary.

Article IV. Purpose of the Association.

The purpose of this association is the advancement of all the educational interests of all the districts represented through coöperation among the districts.

The unity of the high-school work and the grade-school work in the Chaffey Union High School district is made evident to a stranger by the following facts:

The high school furnishes instruction in certain special branches to the grade-school children through its own high-school teachers, who either go from grade school to grade school, or teach the children at the high school after the high-school bus has brought the children to the high-school buildings. The branches taught in this way are manual training, domestic science, band and orchestra music, scouting, athletics, agriculture. In one instance the high-school board has constructed with its own funds a small building as an annex to one grade school for the domestic science teaching.

It is not a matter of astonishment to the visitor to find this particular high school a real community center of intellectual pursuits and a center of agricultural improvement, when he understands the measure of co-operation among the school-board trustees of the community.

In a community where the high-school board of

trustees is willing to coöperate with the grade-school boards, it ought not to be a difficult step for the high-school teachers and the grade-school teachers to form a circle of mutual advantage and benefits. What an opportunity for a high-school principal to vitalize a community to its very fringes is afforded by a voluntary association of all the teachers of all the schools in the high-school district! Such rural community leadership —what a chance for tact, for humanism, for in-reach into the places to which people withdraw with their power and resources!—is the sort held by the old schoolmasters, physicians, and clergymen. But this point of view is not the last word on what high schools can do for agriculture and farm life. There is a very practical high-school method of bringing school thinking to bear upon community life and problems.

The Smith-Hughes Teachers of Agriculture and Their Problem

The Smith-Hughes teachers of agriculture,[1] so called, while occupying strategic places in the nation for assisting agriculture and farm life, have a by no means rosy path of duty. They need to be specially fortified with wisdom and common sense and human understanding, over and above their technical training. To teach in high school sons of farmers how to farm, when the sons go home every night where the struggle to farm is the bread-and-butter struggle of life, is a very ticklish

[1] Smith-Hughes teachers of agriculture are under the control of the Federal Board of Vocational Education. Schools employing such teachers participate in Federal funds under the Smith-Hughes Act of Congress.

procedure. It is teaching on the front line under fire. It is far easier to teach in the agricultural college, a hundred miles away from the farm. It is easier by far to make a one-night stand of teaching in a farm-extension school, and then beat a retreat to the college of agriculture or go on to another community. The Smith-Hughes teacher must face every day those whose farm practices he is trying to improve and must live with them day by day. He has fewer means of escape, even, than the county agricultural agent. The hardness of the task is mentioned, not to frighten the teacher or even cause him to watch his step, but rather as an introduction to a method of solving his problem and making him happy through success.

1. Begin with the Achievements of the Community

The economic and social accomplishments of the families of the high-school district—or the area from which the children come, if the county system prevails and there is no legal school district—the accomplishments and achievements of this community make a good starting-point. To collect and inventory, to recite and count up the annual production of the community, farm by farm, family by family, is a wise procedure. It gets the situation down in black and white at the commencement. It gives credit where credit is due for the kinds of farm enterprise, the prevailing farm practice, the acreage dealt with and worked over, the yields, and the income. What agriculture produces and amounts to in a year, if the teacher is going to help improve it, must certainly be assumed, if not known. It should

better not be simply assumed, but known; better openly known, made a serious endeavor, a worthy statistical search; better still is a coöperative search among students, teacher, and farmers themselves. To induct the Smith-Hughes teacher into the method of sizing up the economic and social condition of his high-school community and of utilizing the results in his teaching and in his contacts with the community will now be our aim.

2. Getting the Grade Schools Interested in the Inventory

Let us suppose there are six grade-school districts in the high-school area, that in this area are sixty-four square miles and three hundred farms, that in each grade-school district are fifty farms and fifty farm homes. The problem of taking the inventory of three hundred farms and homes the first year and perhaps also the second, but especially the first, is rather large considering that there may be no precedent. Not only must new things be done, but parents and farmers and teachers must be convinced that the idea is worth while.

As the first step, early in the year—if possible, in the first two weeks of school—the Smith-Hughes teacher will, let us say, invite all the grade-school teachers to dinner. After dinner he will propose his plan, whereby each school shall make a small inventory of crop, animal, and other accomplishments of its own district during the past year. He will explain that this inventory when finished will be used by each grade school and also be made available for use in his own teaching in the high school. The teachers will be advised to get

the consent and backing of their school boards to the plan before starting in. The plan as a whole will be something after this fashion.

After the grade-school teachers have the consent and indorsement of their school boards to go ahead, they will meet with the Smith-Hughes teacher a second time and decide upon just what most important crops, animals, machinery, and household conveniences they will inventory. This is for the purpose of having a uniform set of items that will allow summarizing for the whole high-school area. Evidently there will be fifty reports for the fifty farms of each grade school, one report to a farm. Before the reports are filled in, the fifty blank sheets will be all alike. There will be a place for the name of the farmer, possibly also for each member of his family, with the age of each; a place for the total number of acres in the farm; places for the number of acres of several of the chief crops, such as oats, corn for ensilage, hay, sugar-beets, pasture. There will be places for the yields of the past year, such as bushels of oats, tons of ensilage, tons of hay, tons of sugar-beets, number of stock provided with pasturage. There will be an inventory of all the live stock, such as number of dairy cows, number of young stock, number of horses, number of hogs, number of young pigs. Then certain pieces of machinery will be so significant in farming that a list will be made of these, and a check-mark will be made after every piece that is present on a farm, such as tractor, silo, manure-spreader, litter-carrier, automobile, truck. The household conveniences that are regarded as specially helpful will be listed, such

as running cold water in the kitchen, running hot water in the kitchen, bath-room with modern bath-tub, electric lights, kitchen cabinet, modern kitchen sink. Checks will be made after such of these as are present.

The Smith-Hughes teacher will be so interested in this inventory that he will agree to furnish the printed or mimeographed sheets of the schedules, fifty to a school. This will be a great help to the grade teachers and will insure uniformity.

When the schedules are ready and in the hands of the grade-school teacher, she will explain what is wanted to a selected number of her school-children. Each such child will be asked to get the facts for his farm and home on a particular day and to bring the schedule, all filled in, back to the school. There will probably be farms and homes in the school district having no children in school. The teacher will select children to visit these farm homes and get the information. It may be necessary for the teacher herself to visit some farm inaccessible to the children, in order to get the information for every farm.

This stage of the process will not and must not be slighted. The value of the whole plan depends upon the care and accuracy of these results. If the facts are all accurate, then the summary for the whole grade-school district will be a piece of real news for the farmers themselves and will be appreciated. The summary or totals of the figures for the fifty farms may be the work of arithmetic classes. At any rate, the teacher, after checking up to the best of her ability the general trustworthiness of the separate schedules,

possibly with the aid of one of the members of her school board, will work out the summary on a separate sheet and have a copy made for each of the other grade-school teachers and one for the Smith-Hughes teacher.

After the several inventories have been completed, summarized, and handed to the Smith-Hughes teacher, he will call these teachers together again, and they will consider as a group how these facts may be utilized by each grade-school teacher in her school. He may trust the ingenuity of the teachers to grasp quickly how the facts may be used in arithmetic, English, and physiology. He can show them how the drawing class may make a map of the grade-school district, and plat the fifty farms, and then make various spot maps to represent the crops. A corn map, wheat map, oat map, pig map, poultry map, will soon follow. All the Smith-Hughes teacher does the first year in perfecting the process of getting the simple inventory and utilizing the facts in the grade school will be just so much done in preparing the pupils who later come up to high school. But the presentation of this inventory method here is with a view to solving the Smith-Hughes teacher's problems in the high school itself.

3. Utilizing the Inventory in High School

The Smith-Hughes teacher may have from twenty to forty students studying agriculture with him. They will be the brothers and sisters of boys and girls in the grade schools. They will be in different years of the course. While the high-school teacher is waiting for the results of the inventory from the grade schools, he

will begin with the groups of his own students, accumulating a set of facts pertaining to the whole high-school district; for it will be remembered that he not only is to make his own acquaintance with his environing farms and homes, but is to lead his students on from this acquaintance as a starting-point in the general study of agriculture.

The first object to be attained in the preliminary view of the whole district is a base map of the school district. Presumably the map can be obtained in an up-to-date atlas of the county, and then enlarged to a scale of four or five inches to the mile. The boundaries of the high school can be had from the clerk of the high-school district. The farm homes should all be represented on the base map; also highways, large streams, railways, school-houses, and churches.

The base map will be made as carefully as possible and as accurately as may be. A second map will be needed; this is a plat map of the farms of the high-school district. On the first map as a base, every farm will be laid. It is possible that such a map of the whole county exists. If so, it will be an easy matter to copy the platting of the high-school district. A little attention will rectify this older map and bring it up to date. If no plat map exists, still it will be worth while to go to the pains of platting the farms. This will be a long job and will be parceled out among the boys as minor projects. The deeds of the farms will contain the boundary lines, and these lines will be transferred to the map. The difficulty of constructing this map will not deter a real teacher from doing it. But maps do

not stop with the plat map of the high-school district. There will also be a geological map. From the United States Geological Survey at Washington may be obtained, for many counties, geological maps. The part of the county map that includes the high-school district may be copied in an enlarged form upon the base map of the high-school district. This may be colored and made to conform perfectly to the geological map. Still another map is necessary, a soil map of the high-school district. Many counties have available their soil maps. These may be obtained from the Government at Washington and copied. If a soil survey has not been made yet of the teacher's county, he will start the making of a rough survey in coöperation with his class, and the outcome will furnish the soil map, which will suffice until a better one takes its place. Improvements or modifications will be made as the year goes on. In certain parts of the country, a water or irrigation map of the high-school district will be made as one of the uniform set of maps. During the year the idea of mapping certain graphic facts will become a habit; and no better way of presenting certain facts of the whole school district can be devised than mapping. As the facts become known, such maps as a woodland map, a pasture map, an orchard map, a corn map, an unimproved land map, can be made.

When the crop, animal, machinery, and household convenience inventory arrives from the grade schools, then the teacher will face the utilization of the facts gathered. One of the first uses will be translating the statistical facts of the inventory into map form. Spot

maps of bushels of wheat, tons of hay, tons of silage will be constructed for the whole high-school district. These maps would contain the outlines of the several grade-school districts and so show the comparative production of the different grade-school districts. This graphic presentation will draw attention more quickly to the salient likenesses and differences of production in the district. The average yields to the acre will be worked out, and these yields will be the basis of comparison with exceptional yields on individual farms. It will be the most natural thing in the world to give special students a project; namely, to survey or gather together minute details of the farm practice of farmers who had the yields by the acre which arise in discussion. The ways of utilizing the inventory will appear so varied, so vital, so self-evident to a live teacher that it is deemed unnecessary here to make further suggestions.

4. Utilizing the United States Census

It would be little short of a great evasion of duty not to mention one further way of getting knowledge of the high-school district; such a knowledge, too, as will aid the teacher in facing the fathers of the sons in school. The United States Census of Agriculture for any State contains several tables which display facts about crops, values of crops; animals, values of animals; lands, values of land, for every county. Even though the latest census report may be several years old and in a sense out of date, nevertheless it is of great value as a beginning for thinking about the productiveness and values of the county. While it is important, more-

over, for the teacher to know these census facts about the county, and to use them with his students, familiarizing them with the United States Census, there is another use of the county facts that is specially important. This is, in brief, to reduce the county tables to the high-school district basis. Let us explain more definitely.

The teacher will assume—he must make the assumption in order to carry out this plan—that the production and values of his high-school district maintained the same average yields of crops, etc., as the county as a whole. He therefore will find what fractional part the improved land of the high-school district is of the improved land of the county, and will make a new set of tables for the high-school district, by multiplying every item in the census county tables by this fraction. Thus, for example, if the high-school district is one thirtieth of the area of the county, then the wheat yield of the district is one thirtieth of that of the county. The teacher will make high-school district tables, comparable with the county tables, and bring them to his students *as a start in thinking*. In the first place, these tables will need correction and modification in several respects. It may take some little time to complete this correction and modification. For example, some things raised in other parts of the county may not be raised at all in the high-school district. Other things may be raised much more largely in the high-school district than in the county at large. It becomes a task, therefore, to modify the second set and finally get a third set of tables for the particular cen-

sus year, like 1920, for the high-school district, a set of tables that will be as near to the facts as may be estimated. This set of tables will always be subject to revision as new facts require.

A fourth set of tables comparable with the third set will also be made by the teacher, namely, for the year just ended. That is, the third set of tables will be corrected and due allowance made for the different circumstances of the last year and of the census year in coming to a fourth set of tables. Here is where the actual inventory, or survey, if you prefer to call it so, made by the grade schools becomes of great value. It will be a guide to the making of the complete fourth set of tables, even in regard to matters not included in the inventory. This fourth set of tables will be under fire all the year and subject to revision.

Such a system of statistics, assumed as they must be, corrected as best can be, revised when found possible, is one of the best expedients for getting students of high-school age accustomed to the economics of farm practice and to the social point of view in production. The method is pedagogically correct. It brings the interest element into the new field and sharpens every sense and faculty of the student when challenged by the scientific ideas set forth.

The every-day utilization of the United States Census reports of agriculture and farm population, as applied to the local high-school area, will bring the census down to the farmer as no other use ever can. When the ordinary farmer, father of the boy in high

school, sees that the agricultural teacher is basing his teaching and his thinking upon the best facts about the production of the high-school area, his respect for what the teacher does and says will be enhanced, and his tendency to criticism turned into coöperation.

CHAPTER VIII

AGRICULTURE AND HOSPITALS

"RURAL health" competes with "rural education" for space in the American press. The threadbare myth of "Farm Women Crowding the Insane Asylums" in time gave way to the fable of the "Terrible Lesson in the Rural Draft Statistics." Lately the "Rural Adenoid" has threatened to reduce somewhat the public's fear for the general health of farm people, restore the old-time serenity of the public, and establish once more their reliance upon fresh air, sunshine, quiet, space, and sleep in the country to work the charm of rural health.

Meanwhile a quiet work has been going on under the lead of private foundations for the eradication of hookworm and pellagra; and there has been a modest campaign on the part of the United States Health Service in collaboration with state boards of health for remedying here and there pathologic rural conditions coming within the field especially of sanitation. A county nurse, moreover, in many rural counties has performed her varied tasks of inspection of school-children, publicity of health rules, and general health counsel for communities. The tuberculosis scout has been on the lookout among farm people. A few national religious

bodies have even established "health centers" and hospitals in a few scattered mountain localities; and, wonderful to say, a few States, with special reference to their rural people, have made it possible for counties which so desire to establish county hospitals. Few counties have so desired, it must be added.

Standing between the two extreme views that farm people are, on the one hand, in wretched health, and, on the other hand, that they are exponents of perfect health, are many intelligent agencies grappling with the tremendous problem of rural health. To the experienced onlooker and observer, however, rural health thinking and rural health measures, whether of a private or of a public nature, are passing through stages comparable with the progress of rural education in the past. Until a broad national program of education and educational facilities was thought out for farm people as a constituent element of our nation, palliatives, makeshifts, and unconnected plans and policies were in vogue and practice. Rational public rural educational ideals had to work their way up between two positions: first, that farmers could not assimilate education of a high type; second, that the education they were getting was good enough and sufficient for the type of work they did and the idyllic life they led. As the educational program of the broad rural educator is in a fair way to permeate farm life, so let us hope that a rational program will come to prevail with respect to rural health.

A consolidation of rural health intelligence, interest, technic, and statesmanship is an imperative need. Confessedly one county nurse, even though maintained at

public expense, is only a small palliative of disease conditions among the twenty thousand people of a county. An investigation of sanitary appliances in one small community of a State goes only a little way into corrective policy for the nation. Even hook-worm, bad as it is, and pellagra, distressing as it is, are either restricted regionally or to an economic class. A broad health policy for thirty millions of farm people, a policy which shall include the normal as well as the subnormal occurrences of daily living, the constant event of maternity among all economic classes of farmers, the inevitable accidents of life, the sweep of contagions, the perversions of internal physiologic organisms, is the pressing problem of health among farm people.

It is the purpose of the present discussion to present the hospital as the key to this broad program of State and nation.

Hospitals the Key to Rural Health

The nation believes in hospitals. The hospital movement has captured the thinking public—*for cities,* as a city institution, like a wholesale coffee-house or a museum of art. Not only must the city now possess the hospital as an institution, but it must be available for all city people, rich and poor. It seems to have achieved such an economic adjustment between the sources of money and the needs of the poor that no one within cities is barred; and, moreover, everybody in the cities knows about the hospital, just as he knows about the physician. And the physician is related to the hospital. So popular, moreover, is the hos-

pital in cities that, like the high school, it has difficulty in bringing its facilities up, in respect to building, laboratories, and personnel of staff, to the demand. High schools in cities are notoriously overcrowded; hospitals, likewise. The popularity of the hospitals, whether of a general or specialized character, means that the hospital is as a facility or health convenience an institution of health, and the key to the general health or disease situation; just as the high school, as an educational institution, is the key to higher education in the city. Schooling has been taken out of the home and dwelling-house and allocated to high-school buildings, a policy of great economy and efficiency. So in cities care of disease has been lifted from the home, house, and family and taken to the hospital, where are assembled all the equipment and skill for combating disease.

The modern answer to human disease in cities, in so far as the answer is really made, is the hospital. Hospitals, whether general or specialized, carry along with them laboratories, clinics, dispensaries. The hospital idea, in other words, is the organized effort of health agencies for effective treatment of disease. Even medical specialisms, like that for eye, ear, throat, and teeth, are relating themselves more and more to hospital treatment. If the dormitory is not a necessity in a line of treatment, then the hospital feature goes on alone without dormitories.

Thirty millions of farm people have their broad health problem, even as they have their educational problem. The almost total absence of a broad hospital policy for

farmers is the clearest indication that the public has not grappled yet with the rural health problem. The hospital is the key to the health problem.

Belonging to Farm People

It has doubtless occurred to the reader that many farm people already employ the hospital facilities of cities and that city hospitals are open to farm people on equal terms with city people. Yes, unquestionably, just as in educational matters, years ago, many farmers sent their children away from home to city high schools. They were the farmers who could afford, and while affording had a strong enough educational ideal to overcome all the difficulties involved, and were living also within access of a high school that happened to have room; but the sum total of such farmers was almost negligible when we take into account the total number of farm children.

It has been mentioned that city hospitals are crowded already. It is necessary only to say that in order to care for the thirty millions of farm people, allowing one bed to two hundred and fifty persons, it will take about one hundred and twenty thousand hospital beds, that is, forty beds on an average to the county, for the whole United States. In order to meet the situation and give the rural people a health policy and a complete health program, they must have a system of hospitals belonging to themselves, a system in which they shall, at least, have as much control and special ownership as they have in their system of schools. To sum the matter up succinctly, the city has enough of its own people to

fill its hospitals, and the country must begin to establish hospitals of its own.

Adapted to Rural Conditions

A plan to meet the health needs of farm people with hospitals confronts the necessity of adapting them to rural conditions. Nearly all modernized institutions for rural people have had to meet the problem of adaptation. The scattered condition of rural residence is the one great circumstance, different from the city, which necessitates changes in the structure and organization of rural social institutions. Modern rural education met by public transportation this distance element involved in a large school. Improvement of the roads used by the school buses was a second element of adaptation. "Teacherages" were a third adaptation. In some instances county administration of rural schools has been a fourth adaptation.

In like manner, it is quite plain that a system of hospitals which shall completely cover the rural field will need to take into account several of the facts that uniquely characterize country living. In the first place, in order to get the volume of business required for a hospital as a going concern, the hospital will need to adapt itself to a wide spread of territory. Doubtless the county area in many cases will be needed in order to support a rural hospital. A county having twenty-five thousand persons living outside of cities of twenty-five thousand people will probably need a single hospital of one hundred beds.

In the second place, the location of the hospital will

be a question requiring more careful adaptation to a variety of circumstances than the location of a city hospital. It must be accessible to the largest number of its constituency. At the same time it must be situated with some regard to the presence of active physicians. It will reckon on the opening to its people of modern highways.

In the third place, it may be necessary to organize partial units or adjuncts to hospital units at out-of-reach places. In fact, the working plan of a rural hospital program will require some experimentation, special effort. The man who can be the architect of a set of properly adjusted rural hospital units will gain a place and name in American history.

Ambulance Service

How far we have to go in bringing rural health to the nation by the way of a fully equipped hospital service is made apparent when we suggest that the ambulance service will be as ready, immediate, and efficient for the farmer as for the city man. Why should we think it incongruous to suppose that an ambulance will be ready for a quick twenty-mile drive to an isolated farm? Here is where the highway problem intersects the hospital program.

Some Reassuring Instances

We are not wholly at sea on the matter of rural hospitals. Many thoughts have been spoken. Many statistics have been prepared. Much urging and preaching has been done. Several instances of wonder-

ful rural community hospitals have been given space in the press. So far has the matter gone that several States have passed laws permitting counties to establish hospitals. Some counties have accepted the privilege and begun to show what the hospital means for farmers. Rural education had its indigenous modern schools. Trial laws for consolidation of schools were enacted. These broke the ice of custom and started people to think. Soon the frontier in education began to break up, and modern life began to show itself in rural schools.

It is not bold, therefore, to predict the day when the farmer shall have his hospital and when one more bridge shall have been built from the frontier to the modern level of living.

CHAPTER IX

AGRICULTURE AND CHURCHES

DURING the late war a cablegram came from France announcing, "In northern France three hundred rural churches, sanctuaries of the peasant farmers, lie in heaps of tumbled stone." They were, the cable reports, "the quaintly beautiful altars, devoted in many cases for three centuries to the constant worship of God. Lowly in stature, but towering above the modest houses and cottages about it, the farmer's church in lovely France was a holy object of sacred memory. The bell in its tower has sounded the angelus from time out of mind. Heard afar in beet-field or vineyard, waited for as a daily part of many a simple, beautiful, pious life, the bell tolled out; the farmer, hoe in hand, ceased toil for a moment, made the sign of the cross, and bowed the head in prayer. Beneath the tower the farmer had been baptized; the bell had rung his marriage peal; it would toll at his burial as it had for his father before him, as it would for his children after him. More than ancient stone lies crumbled, more than stained glass windows, more than paintings, and objects of symbolic art. Desecrated and wrecked lie the holy tablets of sacred memory of a vast farm population."

Poor France was at that very moment on its knees to this humble "Angelus" hoe farmer, begging him to coax more life-giving food from the soil. The soldiers of lovely France were bleeding to redeem this part of holy earth, this sacred soil, from whose mothering arms Frenchmen had sprung. In the very same hour we in America were also feeling the cramp of American food shortage and were experiencing city by city a new set of appreciations of the land, the soil, and the humble tiller of the soil. The Federal Government and all state governments were daily beseeching the farmers to increase their sowings and plantings. For a brief moment of life the countryman was our hero: farmer, planter, rancher, divided honors with the soldier, as possible saviors of the nation, and of democracy in the world.

It will be forgiven if use is made of this world-wide spot-light upon the farmer in war-time to bring to national attention the relation of the American church to the American farmer, and to map out somewhat crudely the course of rural strategy for the church in dealing with this rural situation.

Rural Policy in Government

It will doubtless astound some churchmen to know the far-reaching character of the rural policy already engaging the best energies of the United States Government; to know the millions of dollars yearly invested in educational service in order to bring scientific method to bear upon the farmer's occupation; to know the numerous staff of experts in every State seeking to reconstruct

the industry of farming so as to make of it an intellectual occupation. "Better farming, better business on the farm, better living on the farm," adopted from that veteran ruralist, Sir Horace Plunkett, has become a government slogan since the days of Roosevelt.

Newer Rural Ideals in Education

The educational forces of our country, whether in universities, colleges, or normal schools, even in high schools, and in fact in the ordinary country school, are, it is no exaggeration to say, inspired with a vision of an educated country-side. New types of schools for the farmer's children, both in the lower grades and in the higher, are the outcome. More country children finishing school, more country children going to high school and to college, is the result. The rural school-house under the inspiration of this new creed is becoming a forum for discussion and a meeting-place for the country neighborhood. It is a commonplace now in American education to display wonderful achievements made by some little country school. In the realm of finance, the bankers of America have their own special banker-farmer movement, a long-time policy of building up the industry of farming and not only keeping the fertility of the land from disappearing in the bushel measure but keeping the intellect of the land from drifting away to the city without rime or reason.

What has the church done for the farmer? Surely in the face of this profound general recognition of the farmer class, who make up about thirty per cent of our American population, the church, speaking for religion,

will be called upon some day soon to answer the query, "What recognition have you given the farmer?"

The church finally discovered for itself and acknowledged woman's right and gave her a place in church administration. The church finally discovered for itself the psychology of the child; and has begun to concede to children a religious education based on child behavior. Is it too much to expect that the great church body shall discover for itself the farmer, and begin to mobilize his special abilities and draft his powers into world-wide Christian service?

Let us take a closer look at this man, who a few short years ago was in the lime-light, as the world waited before him on her knees for food.

The Farmer and His Work

Turn your eyes upon the farmer at his work. There he is, lifting the surface of the earth, turning it on its face, introducing a little seed, and waiting for the seed to follow its God-given law of growth and reproduce itself. There he is, tending his flocks and herds, his cotton-fields, his wheat-fields, his vineyards and orchards. He is God's husbandman. He deals with life and helps God reproduce and multiply life on the earth. He lives his life in the midst of his work, the whole family on call day and night in the interest of growing plant or lost sheep or chilled, storm-menaced beast. Living in the open, working under the vault of heaven, he associates constantly and intimately with the great physical forces with which God works in His world.

The farm family form a partnership among them-

selves in a very real sense in this work of producing in bulk the seed and the animal. The child is brought up from infancy an apprentice to the occupation. Every girl is taught to work and do her bit for family maintenance. The fact that the family is so largely a real asset in farming has probably set the seal of country approval upon the home and family as an institution, so that to-day, without doubt, the farm is the bulwark of the American home. In our largest cities the home as a home, the family as a family, are at the last ditch; and it appears that the humble farmer is holding the home line for religion and for the church.

The Farmer and Religion

If there are religious instincts in men and women, those instincts are to be found preëminently in the farm population. The mysterious life of the plant and animal seems to convey God's presence to the farmer, as iron, wood, leather, cloth, and gold never convey God to the urban artificer who works his own will upon God's materials. The farmer, God's husbandman, in a peculiar sense seems to be God's man, God's steward, God's tenant, God's co-worker in life-saving and life-perpetuation.

The Bible, in the literature both of the Old Testament and of the New, pays distinct tribute in its literary make-up to the relation between religion and agriculture. The Old Testament is a joint book of country life and religion. The Psalms breathe the free spirit of the winds. The hills, and streams, the pastures and meadows, the grass and grain, are all there. The cattle

on a thousand hills symbolize to the agricultural mind God's wealth. The parables of Jesus are in the language of field and farm work—the sheep and shepherd, the tares, the vine and its branches, the wicked husbandmen. The language of mystery, growth, decay, will doubtless always be agricultural. The ancient farmer and the modern farmer seem linked indissolubly to religion. When God wanted a leader for His people to free them from bondage, He chose a lad and brought him up finally on a farm. Moses, slow of speech, but acquainted with God, led his people out of Egypt. When God wanted a king for His people, He chose a farmer boy, David, tending the flocks, rather than a goldsmith or an ironworker. When God wanted a prophet to shake the degenerate cities of the plain, He chose Amos, a farmer, blunt but real, just and bold.

Agriculture and the American Ministry

Not only has the most ancient farmer been timber for religious leadership in the distant past, but all through early American history a steady stream of farm youth, guided by New England and Southern pastors, went to the church colleges and found their way into the web and woof of church organization, as ministers, as church leaders among laymen, lawyers, captains of industry, merchant princes. The exodus from the farms to the city in the days of the virile country church was one strong factor in the present urban church organization of America. The strong conviction of American Christianity came from the rugged individuality of

farm-bred youth. The religious imagination of America's great preachers can be traced to the open sky and free air of the country-side. The urban church of America, in other words, has had its sources in the springs and streams of country life.

The Farmer's Churches To-day

The farmer has four types of churches to-day in America: the open country church, the hamlet church, the village church, the small-city church. The hamlet church contains seventy-five per cent of farm families. The village church contains fifty per cent of farmers. The small-city church, in cities ranging from three thousand to eight thousand, contains fifteen per cent of farmers. In churches of larger cities the farmer tends to disappear.

The outstanding characteristics of the country, hamlet, and village churches to which the farmer belongs, considering the United States as a whole, are as follows: (1) absentee preachers, that is, no resident pastors; (2) unorganized, ungraded churches, that is, occasional or periodic mass-meetings; (3) religiously divided and strongly competitive communities. It has been estimated that twenty millions of America's thirty millions of land-workers are without resident pastors, without much of a church organization, and yet subject to intense sectarian consciousness. This is truly a situation of the most stupendous waste of spiritual power in all America's wasteful history. The springs of religion are being squandered at the very source. The head-

water hills of God, whence come the cool waters of religion to the thirsty cities, are suffering fearful neglect if not exploitation.

The Farmer's Changing Psychology

The changing type of farm thinking presents an aspect of our rural problem which gives an element of urgency and immediacy to all methods of rural relief. Boldly and bluntly stated, the old-time farmer of the "Angelus" hoe-in-hand type is disappearing in America. The machine farmer, the land engineer, is taking his place. A brain-using, scientific type is displacing the slow, plodding, muscular lifter of the soil. Government is placing a staff organization of thinkers at the disposal of these scattered land-dwellers, with a line organization of extension captains in every county. This striking change in the nature of farming is having a profound effect upon the social development and institutional appreciations of the farm population. The new farmer is forming clubs and putting up community houses, getting new types of schools, getting into the swing of community modes of action, and is ready for a new type of church. The time is now ripe. The new farmer may now be interested in an efficient, organized church. If the church bodies delay the reconstruction of church organization, the farmer's social energies may become employed in this wonderful community machinery at the expense of social religion. From the midst of the social awakening rings out a grave warning that rural church development is now at the crisis. Energy of the human mind once set free will be used,

and the new farmer is ready, but is the nation's church leadership, also?

Rural Strategy and the Church

The surpassing romance and adventure of the American church in this generation has been its drive on paganism across the seas. Christian strategy has turned on the world enterprise of "missions." It has massed its consecrated intellectual energies; it has joined forces with Christendom; it has poured its treasure into the foreign crusade. The task looms larger and larger. The church must not, and cannot lose; and yet the need of resources in treasure, men and women, and perhaps, greatest of all, in religious imagination, is staggering. America pauses now to inventory its home resources for carrying to a conclusion this majestic enterprise of God. Is there any suspicion that the American church has reached its climax? Does it question its finances, does it nervously look for prophets like those of old, men of stronger faith and more unremitting conviction?

It is out of this pause and hesitation, out of the shock and uncertainty of war, out of the aftermath of hate, wretchedness, and suspicion, that the church in its bewilderment may well turn its strategy to an untapped treasure-house of resources in the rural reserves. Twenty millions of the best blood and stamina in America stand ready to be organized into efficient Christian communities to assist urban ingenuity in the world adventure for God. The country is the home of religious feeling. In it religious genius is native. To redeem

country life, this is the rural strategy to save the church's great world adventure in missions.

The rural church in America has been ground to powder between the upper and lower millstones of two facts: first, the inescapable geographical necessity of a scattered farm residence under bondage to distance, from which urban population in clusters is free; and, secondly, an unregulated deadly competition of great national church bodies, within this scattered population, attempting to make three or four blades of ecclesiastical corn grow where there is sustenance enough to bring only one to maturity. The upper millstone of geography is irreducible, inevitable, and will remain. The lower millstone of denominational competition is controllable, and there is a cry to heaven for its removal. At any cost, at any price, this stone of offense must be removed.

Would you test the rural church situation before the bar of human judgment, call for a Michelangelo or a Leonardo da Vinci to interpret the rural church of America in a great piece of Christian art.

Show him the rural sheep without shepherds. Show him the proud Christian sects dividing these shepherdless sheep into pitiful huddled groups. Tell him to place Jesus in the midst and make the picture appeal to the heart of humanity; Jesus, who in Christian art holds the child in His arms, or is raising the fallen woman, or breaking bread to the hungry multitude, or giving His life-blood for the world upon the cross. When your Christian artist shall once see the rôle, in the rural drama, of the great Christian sects, he will say, "They

shall go into the picture, but robed in sackcloth and ashes."

Is there a plan for this policy of conservation of home resources in the development of the spiritual assets of the rural church? The first step is plain and inescapable, a national staff of religious statesmen consecrated to the development of the rural church.

This staff will grapple by God's help with the emancipation of twenty millions of land-dwellers from the millstone of denominational exploitation.

But this step requires a miracle first. It is the paralytic over again. He cannot take the first step. Why? Because there has not arisen yet a man of faith to bid the paralytic walk. Denominations are doing wonderful things as denominations, each for itself—national country-life leaders, country-life teachers in colleges, demonstration churches, higher salaries for rural pastors, rural-life conferences and summer schools, and many other things, among which should be mentioned the delightfully friendly relation of these various country-life men and committees and conferences of the different religious bodies. This denominational interest in the rural church problem is hopeful. This movement may bring forth the man of faith who can bid the paralytic stand and walk. However, there is a bare possibility that competitive sectarianism, with more weapons, may wage war more jealously and perhaps more keenly, and the farmers' churches may still remain uninfluential. The cordial and friendly personal relationships of the different denominational country-life leaders must not

be taken for the denominational *entente cordiale* which is to consolidate the rural church groups into great rural churches, and give to every farm family an organized church. This will require that the spirit of Christ shall melt down the haughty, unbending individualisms of the proud sects into a single, common aim in country life.

Consolidation of country school districts and schools for modernized education of farm children; consolidation of rural trade-agencies into complete terminal towns for a modernized rural standard of living; consolidation of church groups for a powerful rural religion. Can these things be? It is so hard to give up the present possession on bare promise of a greater possession. The little country school still sticks but is slipping. The little country village sticks and will die sticking. The little country church, will it also hang on to its own life and lose it, or will it merge its life, and gain it back a thousandfold?

CHAPTER X

CAN THE FARM FAMILY AFFORD MODERN INSTITUTIONS?

"WE cannot afford it, we simply cannot afford it," has been one of the most common plaints in the human family.

"Though we cannot afford it, we must have it, because we cannot afford to be without it," is a very frequent modern variation of the theme.

Between the simple idea of not affording it and the complex idea of not affording to be without it lies a long range of various ideals of living. There lies also a variety of ideas of financing.

The father says, "We cannot afford to drain that ten-acre lot." The son says: "We cannot afford not to drain it. We must drain it." The father says, "We have no money to spend in draining." The son replies, "We will borrow the money, and let the drains pay for themselves." The father may be right and the son wrong. On the other hand, the son may be right and the father wrong. It all depends.

If affording is an elusive thing in families when it comes to the matter of domestic budgets, much more is it elusive and almost an underground thing in population groups and classes, when it comes to budgets for

institutions. Recognizing the difficulty of giving an answer to the question whether the farm family can afford modern institutions as well as the city, it does seem justifiable to open up discussion and bring to light some of the factors now hidden in the situation.

Let us try to simplify our subject as much as possible by naming four modern institutions which will stand for us in place of modern institutions in the abstract. Let us limit our discussion, therefore, in the main to public libraries, general hospitals, recreation centers, and high schools. These are well accredited in the public mind of the city population as worthy of support whether private and philanthropic or of a municipal budgetary character. Andrew Carnegie's library benefactions have done much to place a public library in towns and cities and to win over annual municipal appropriations for maintenance. Religious bodies have popularized general hospitals as public necessities. Physicians and surgeons have given their moral support, and finally municipalities have begun to contribute to these institutions. Recreation centers, playgrounds, salaried trained leadership, have come slowly, through much struggle, to find a place in municipal budgets. High schools are part and parcel of every city budget. Let us narrow our present discussion down to whether the farm family can afford these modern institutions, which cities have come in very recent years to recognize as necessary and have felt that they could afford.

A second preliminary question is that of a criterion or test of affording. Here is the difficult part of the task. Here is where it is impossible to get unanimous

consent. Proof is lacking along any line. Nobody knows the underlying facts. Cities have the institutions. Shall we assume that they can afford them? Let us so assume, and pay no attention to the possibility that even cities are going beyond their means in maintenance of these four public enterprises.

In the absence of a recognized criterion of the institutions a population group can or cannot afford, we shall summon for our consideration such comparisons of property, income, taxes, bonded debt, tax-levying groupings, and numbers of producing people as are possible, between the city group and farm group, in the expectation that sources of ability to afford may emerge and that inability to afford may be better located. The discussion plainly involves economics. It also involves political science. But it no less involves the broad features of social science.

One question involving a criterion of affording will be a cause of some dispute. It is this: Shall the "property" in the comparison between farm and city be the net worth of the total number of individuals making up the farm population? Or shall "property" be the value of land, buildings, live stock, crops in hand, etc., directly connected with agriculture, irrespective of the question of who holds the title? Put the matter thus: Which is the true criterion of a population's affording public institutions: net worth of individuals, or property involved in the business? We cannot discuss this problem at length. It would take us too far afield. One consideration only will be made. If the criterion were net worth of individuals, then in cities some millions of in-

dividuals with little or no net worth would be virtually paupers, utilizing hospitals, libraries, schools, playgrounds, by sufferance. The theory of taxation for public institutions is involved at this point.

Farm Population *versus* City Population

In 1920, the U. S. Census gave the farm population as 31,614,269. During the past three years it is a matter of common knowledge that a strong current of migration has set in from farm to city. A government estimate for the year 1921 based on returns from ten thousand farms indicated a net loss in that year of nearly half a million persons. It is quite probable that the farm population is now around thirty millions.

Here are, in round numbers, six million families on six million farms. It is, of course, absurd to ask whether each family can separately afford modern institutions. It is probably almost as absurd to ask whether each township of farmers, in States like Wisconsin where the township is the farmer's local municipality, can afford a modern library, hospital, recreation center, and high school. But the mention for a moment of these absurdities sobers us and shows us that bound up in our theme is the pertinent question of what group of farmers is under consideration for a unit of library, a unit of hospital, a unit of recreation center, a unit of high school. This inquiry discloses to us how complicated a problem is before us, for it may well turn out that neither any farm family can afford these institutions, nor any existing governmental group; while at the same time the individual resources of the thirty millions of farmers

would be sufficient to finance all these modern institutions, if only the thirty millions could be grouped into efficient groups. Let us watch this aspect of our problem as we go on.

In order to make the comparison between the city population and the farm population more definite and graphic, let us pick out a particular city population of about the same number. The population of cities ranging from twenty-five hundred to one hundred thousand inhabitants has approximately thirty millions of people. Suppose we use this set of cities and this population in our comparative thinking, where the two sets of population are considered. These are the smaller and medium-sized cities. In fact, in common parlance, the list includes the larger towns and villages. They are all essentially alike in this respect; namely, they are compact legal groups, chartered by legislative enactment, and given powers of local government, and especially of taxation, and borrowing and bonding. We have picked this set of smaller cities, towns, and villages for comparison because, in the first place, the farm population is scattered around and among these smaller cities, towns, and villages, and bears a very important relation to these trade centers as retail consumers of their trade goods and services. In the second place, virtually every one of these incorporated places has a high school and public library; a large percentage of them have recreation facilities; and fifty per cent of them have general hospitals. In the third place the cities having a concentration of great nationally produced wealth are left out.

If one will try to visualize, not merely on the United States map but over the landscape of the States, these two population groups, the following discussion will prove more fertile.

Value of Farm and City Property

The United States Census of Agriculture for 1920 gives the total value of farm property (by whomsoever owned), including land, buildings, implements and machinery, and live stock, as seventy-eight billion dollars in round numbers, no account being taken of crops on hand, cash on hand, or other forms of property. This makes a per capita value of $2464 for every man, woman, and child of the farm population of 1920. For land and buildings alone the per capita value was $2100; for land alone, $1734. The range and variety of values can be seen by the difference in the per capita (farm population) total value of all farm property of the following States: Alabama, $600; Georgia, $805; Texas, $1909; New York, $2385; Indiana, $3354; Colorado, $4047; Iowa, $8612.

Two carefully studied estimates of the material wealth of the United States are available: one by W. R. Ingalls, in "Wealth and Income of the American People," placing the figure for December 31, 1920, at $290,909,285,628, or close to $2739 per capita; the other by W. I. King, in "The Net Volume of Saving in the United States," for January 1, 1919, $294,145,000,000, or approximately $2820 per capita.

Dr. L. C. Gray, of the Bureau of Agricultural Eco-

nomics, United States Department of Agriculture, in a detailed study of the "Accumulation of Wealth by Farmers," estimated the net worth of the total farm population on January 1, 1920, as $62,522,729,703, or close to $1978 per capita of farm population. If we subtract Dr. Gray's net worth of all farm classes from the Ingalls figure, the per capita net worth of the population other than farmers stands at $3060; if from Dr. King's figure, $3175. These three calculations are not precisely comparable because of a slight difference in point of time. It would appear, however, that the non-farming class as a whole has a net worth per capita fifty per cent higher than the farming class as a whole.

The United States Census "Financial Statistics for Cities" for 1921 gives us the estimated true valuation of all real and personal property *subject to the general tax* in all cities of the United States ranging from a population of thirty thousand upward. Unfortunately for our special purpose here, the figures are not given for the cities ranging from twenty-five hundred persons up to thirty thousand. What we should like for comparison is the total value of all property in the cities from twenty-five hundred up to one hundred thousand persons. But perhaps we are not badly in the dark, for we have enough information to get our general bearings. Let us see. Here are the figures for the upper portion of the cities in our thirty-million city group; viz., for the 105 cities in the group having from thirty thousand to fifty thousand population the per capita true value of all real estate and personal property subject to the

general tax for city purposes was, in 1921, $1338.97. For the seventy-six cities having a population from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand the per capita true value of all such property in 1921 was $1271.15. Lacking information from the same source for the cities from twenty-five hundred up to thirty thousand, we are compelled to look elsewhere.

The tax department of the Chicago and North Western Railway Company furnishes us the estimated full value of real estate and the 1921 assessed full value of general personal property in thirty-five Iowa cities, each having from 2125 to 5000 population (only eight of these cities have less than 2500 population). The per capita true total value of the property was $1990, distributed as follows: real estate, $1383; tangible personal, $170; money and credits, $437. The company furnishes us also the similar facts for the fourteen Iowa cities ranging from five thousand up to one hundred and thirty-five thousand. (Only one city, Des Moines, has over one hundred thousand population.) The per capita total value of the property, similarly based, was, for 1922, $2035, distributed as follows: real estate, $1592; tangible personal, $211; money and credits, $232. The range of variation in the two lists of values was very narrow.

To sum up this particular comparison of city and farm property values, the best we can do is to register the per capita city property (limited to such property as is subject to the general property tax) as lying between $1300 and $2000; while the per capita farm

property (not limited by any taxing features or ownership title) is $2100 for real estate alone, and $2464 per capita when machinery and live stock are added, whereas the per capita net worth of the farm population stands around $1978, as against the per capita net worth of the non-farming population, $3060.

Farm Income and City Income Compared

The national Bureau of Economic Research in a document entitled, "Distribution of Income by States in 1919," gives us the only available means of comparing farm income with city income for the United States, State by State, in the year 1919, when, it will be recalled, farm income reached a high peak, from which it has decidedly dropped in later years. The comparison, as would be expected, is not wholly satisfactory. But, being the best at hand, it must serve.

The bureau gives in its final tables the total income of the nation for the year 1919 as $66,252,601,000; total income for farm laborers, $2,345,964,000, and for farmers, $10,851,096,000. The sum of the incomes of farm laborers and farmers is $13,197,060,000. And the total national income minus the income of the farm laborers and farmers is $53,055,541,000. These basic figures, when combined with the basic figures of total population and farm population, result in a per capita farm population income of $417 and in a per capita income for the rest of the population of $716. Let us introduce a short table at this point which will carry some of the per capita results of this authority as ap-

plied to various States in widely separated parts of the United States.

FARM INCOME AND CITY INCOME FOR THE YEAR 1919

States	*Farm income*	*City income*
United States	{ 469 King { 417 Knauth	716
Nebraska	700	700
Iowa	724	691
Alabama	244	478
New York	550	900
Indiana	463	634
California	1042	780
Illinois	643	790
Texas	468	605
Missouri	378	570
Vermont	370	618

It will be noticed that the per capita income of the farm population in California, Iowa, and Nebraska is either equal to, or in excess of, the city income in the same States respectively.

One other thing should be noted at this point: Alabama cities with a per capita income of $478, Missouri cities with $570, both approaching the average farm income of $417 or $469, were in 1919, and are now, maintaining their quota of modern institutions. For instance, Alabama: 66 hospitals, with 2703 beds; 29 libraries; 22 recreation centers; 181 high schools. Missouri: 44 hospitals, 1678 beds; 57 libraries; 27 recreation centers; 549 high schools.

FARM TAXES COMPARED WITH CITY TAXES

In the year 1921, the cities from thirty thousand to one hundred thousand in population spent forty-nine

per cent of their total city budget on schools, libraries, recreation, and health. The percentage is distributed as follows:

Schools	42.45
Libraries	1.35
Health	2.35
Recreation	2.85
	49.00

We do not have the high-school budget separately. But practically every city has the four items in its budget.

It has not been possible to collect the data for farm taxes in like manner, distributed among these four items. Presumably, however, no percentage will appear for libraries or recreation, and little for health (nothing for general hospitals, hospitals in counties being for the poor and insane).

Note in passing should be made of the fact that the farmer in the prices for the goods which he purchases of the city business man—harness, wagons, plows, fertilizer, clothes, furniture, groceries, plumbing, and the like—pays as a consumer his share of the overhead expense of the business, in which item is the forty-nine per cent of the total municipal taxes going for schools, health, recreation, and libraries. There may be a question whether the tax on the city man's entire business enterprise can be shifted to the ultimate consumer of his business product. The tax on the land part of the

business, for example, may, generally speaking, be conceded as not capable of being shifted; but without question some part of the tax is shifted, and the farmer is therefore, as a matter of fact, helping to pay the schooling of the city boys and girls in high schools, and to pay for hospitals for the city's sick and for recreation facilities and library facilities for the city. This fact certainly presents a strange anomaly, viz., that the farmer can afford to help sustain city high schools, hospitals, libraries, and recreation places but possibly may not afford to have these institutions himself.

In facing this strange situation, the mind of the serious student goes over at once to the farmer's business enterprise to see what similar overhead expense is shifted to the city consumer of wheat, milk, meat, cotton, and potatoes. Here he is met with the fact that upward of three quarters of the farmer's property subject to general tax is land, and the tax cannot be shifted. On the balance, his school tax, broadly speaking, carries no high-school tax and a smaller per capita grade-school tax than in the city. There is no library tax, a negligible health tax, no recreation tax. In his local taxes, therefore, the farmer seems unable to get from the city consumer of his goods a compensation in kind to offset his own contribution to the upkeep of the city man's institutions.

But the student now insists that the farmer must somewhere get back from the city what he pays to the city. He therefore begins to scrutinize the state and federal taxes in an effort to discover such an offset.

In vain, however, does the student search in state and federal taxes for an offset in kind; that is, toward farmer high schools (with some exception, to be sure, in certain regions), libraries, recreation centers, and hospitals. Whatever legacy is left to the country-side by cities year by year through state and federal taxation —whether in highways, graded schools, universities, extension information on soils and agriculture—the four items in question are on the whole left out.

Farm Bonded Debt and City Bonded Debt Compared

How much bonded debt can a population group constantly hold up? This question is important, for by the bonded debt route cities have been able to have institutions before they cared to pay cash for them; that is, speaking in ordinary terms, before they could afford them. Or to put it a little differently, the discovery of the device of a bonded debt has enabled the city to afford an institution which possibly it could not otherwise have had. Bonding is now in question as a possible device for our farm population. How much affording power have they by this method?

We do not know. No one has dogged the thing down. The presumption is strong that farmers have not used the bonding method so variously as cities, nor so vigorously as cities. This presumption needs thorough verification.

We do have figures, however, on cities. According to the census report on cities the group of cities from fifty thousand population to one hundred thousand carries over its head, like an umbrella, an average of

three million dollars per city. The group from thirty thousand to fifty thousand carries per city one and one half million dollars. New York City carries one billion seven hundred million dollars, about $340 per capita. This bonded debt provides high schools, hospitals, libraries, recreation centers. It seems a pity to leave this interesting comparison at so inconclusive a point.

Farm Population Unit and City Unit Compared

Has the farm family an economical governmental population unit for affording the local modern institutions which the city affords? The underlying principle at this point is what is known familiarly in industry as volume of business. If the farm population of thirty millions is put up in packages of too small a volume to afford an institution, then they are in almost as bad a situation as if each farm family were "going it alone" on institutions and the farmers had no local groups at all—as if they had, in fact, only the State and the nation. What is the local farm population package? A township containing the standard thirty-six square miles of area, or something a little more or less, is the farmers' ordinary local unit. It has a population averaging between five hundred and six hundred farm persons. In the East South Central region, containing Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, the unit would be 1080 persons, if such a unit were in existence. In the Middle West, the unit is about eight hundred persons. The township, as a whole, or a local unit like a township, has a volume of persons somewhat

like a village of from five hundred to one thousand persons.

This unit is really too small to support with a high degree of economy and effectiveness modern institutions such as cities possess.

The next farm unit for consideration is the county. There are about three thousand counties in the United States, with an average farm population of ten thousand persons. Here is a unit of a far different kind from the township; different because it contains usually several distinct community groups instead of one. The county is in no sense comparable with a village, town, or city of any size. The county as a collection of social groups would be comparable to a so-called "greater" city, which in fact is a rather compact aggregation of several smaller suburban city municipalities, satellites to a larger central city. A "Greater Boston" has a certain unity; but with the institutions we are speaking about, each satellite unit provides for its own municipality.

Observing this characteristic of the county, that it is different from a local municipality in structure, we shall, however, consider whether it provides the requisite volume of farm persons to float the institutions in question.

We are not in doubt at this point, because we have examples enough in various States to point the way. County administration of high schools, for example, in a State like Utah, will provide for a county several high schools situated conveniently for the entire population. The experience of Utah shows that the county does furnish the necessary volume of farm persons, and, more-

over, that county administrators have the point of view of the whole population sufficiently to establish as many high schools as the need warrants.

In like manner several States have under new legislative enactments established county hospitals and county libraries, showing that the belief exists that the county can carry these institutions. It is noteworthy that West Virginia counties contemplate the establishment of county camp grounds for their farm boys' and girls' clubs as an adjunct to the state camp. This would indicate that the county unit is adequate for the maintenance of certain types of recreation places for farm people.

A careful survey of county legislation in the United States during the past ten years will demonstrate that at least a certain percentage of counties have the necessary volume of farm persons to maintain modern institutions. The difficult part of the problem in such counties is to locate the institutions so as to make them available to all parts of the county.

Numbers of Producing People in Farm and City Groups Compared

There is another interesting criterion of affording institutions, viz., the number of producing persons in any unit of the farm population. The question is something like this: has a unit of farm population of ten thousand persons a sufficient number of active producing persons to carry modern institutions for its whole unit? Put a little differently, the question may be stated thus: does a unit of ten thousand farm people have such a

large number of non-producing people to take care of and provide with the basic necessities of life that it cannot afford the institutions that carry into the home the enrichment of higher living and some of the comforts of knowledge and health? Put it more definitely: does the farm population carry the load of a large number of children under ten years of age; does it carry a large number of aged people; do these groups of non-producers handicap the population, in comparison with the city group?

The 1920 census shows that in cities of twenty-five hundred and upward 19 per cent of the population are under ten years of age. In the total farm population of the country 25.7 per cent are under ten years of age. Put into concrete form, in a unit of 10,000 city people, 1900 young children would be non-producers; in 10,000 farm people, 2570 would be non-producing children. The farm unit would be carrying a handicap of 670 children, and the city would, theoretically, have 670 more producers. In the thirty-million city group there are two million fewer children under ten years of age than in the thirty millions of farm people.

It would be interesting to know how the farm and city groups compare in the matter of other groups of non-producers, such as those incapacitated through age, invalidism, or riches. The data, however, as yet are lacking. But the extra burden of two million children to rear and educate, with two million fewer producers to do it, raises a serious question on the score of how to do it. It is evident that the farm population is pouring this continuous surplus of adolescents, ready reared

and ready educated by the farm people, into the city groups as producers of city wealth. The question again comes back: what compensation has the farm population for its contribution of producers to city production, and for the ultimate wealth of this contribution? No answer is ready, because nobody has dug the matter out. We must rest our comments at this point, hoping later for more information.

In closing the presentation it must be acknowledged that our results are wholly inconclusive. We simply bring up a new problem involving economics, political science, and social science. Even presumptions are hazardous at this stage of the inquiry. The institutions in question—high school, modern public library, modern hospital, modern recreation center—are generally accepted adjuncts of modern city life, and are looked upon as bringing into home life enrichment and such meliorating influences as tend to stabilize, protect, and perpetuate the family. It is probably justifiable to presume that these enrichments would do for the farm home what they do for the city home.

Moreover, we do know that a small percentage of the farm population which resides within the incorporated limits of cities is already enjoying all these facilities. We furthermore know that another very small percentage of farm families, through the medium of various legislative devices in counties and in so-called consolidated school districts, are likewise enjoying some of these institutions. The consolidated school movement probably points the way like a sign-board to the wider utilization of these modern facilities. At heart this

school movement was simply one of creating a unit of population for school purposes large enough to insure a modern school. Why not, therefore, if other conditions of affording permit, create enlarged library districts, hospital districts, recreation districts.

The city of twenty-five thousand persons is fortunate in having a population group large enough to support within itself each of the four institutions. It may very well turn out that the farm population will find it to their advantage to make up some of these new districts in municipal alliance with towns and cities of ten thousand population and under, towns and cities which have in themselves hardly a sufficient volume of persons to maintain a hospital. Perhaps, on the other hand, the county can go forward toward all of these institutions.

This crude discussion will perform its part if it opens the way to serious research along the line of these various criteria of affording, so that one year hence or ten years hence a demonstration can be made one way or the other. America should not let this question sink into oblivion. Americans should know whether farm people can afford homes enriched by large, vital, collectively maintained modern institutions. If it turns out that farmers cannot afford hospitals and libraries as matters stand, then America should know why not, and what the remedy is. If it turns out statistically that farmers can afford such up-to-date facilities, America should know why the farm people do not have them. Nothing short of this direct inquiry will suffice. Even if it should take a commission of financial experts to get at the facts, it would be fruitful and profitable.

CHAPTER XI

REPLANNING THE CITY AS A PLACE NOT TO LIVE IN

WHAT, no longer live in cities? Only work in cities? De-home, de-residence, and de-house every city? Plan all the cities over again into purely commercial areas, for factories, shops, mills, offices, stores? Lock the city up at night and go home somewhere else to sleep? Yes, all of that, and —well, just that.

The fact is that the city, modern or ancient, is not a fit place to live in and make a home in and bring up children in. It is not a good place to tee off from in the morning. It is no place to hole into at the end of the day. The city of moderns is a vast workshop at best. Business is in the driver's seat and rides roughshod over life. Let us go the limit of concession and surrender the whole city to business and, as for ourselves, move out into God's country and live while we live with trees at our door, with air to breathe, with God's sunlight pouring in, with space to move about in and quiet to cover us.

But why call the situation rural? Where is the rural part of the problem?

Not to draw the matter out at length, this is it: to put all the city people into a residence zone, out of the pre-

cincts of the business city, is, so far at least, to ruralize the homes of city people. It is to give every city family a sunshine home, a home which possesses many of the advantages of the farm home. To suggest the desirability of such a thing, and to show, in the most general sort of way even, how it could be done, is to grapple with a great rural problem, even though also an urban problem.

To decentralize the homes of city people will take up much agricultural land. Too much, it will be said by some persons. This is another rural aspect of the situation. To bring all the city families into the country and let them share in country life will go far, it may be expected, toward mending the break between farm people and city people. At any rate, let us think together on this great proposal to ruralize all city living.

The Pressure of Business upon Home Life

First let us look squarely at the indictment that business is in the driver's seat and rides roughshod over life in the American city. Is it true? If it is exaggerated, is there truth enough in it to make one pause?

Do you remember when the city of twenty thousand began to leap toward a city of fifty thousand people? You were surprised one morning to see the breaking of ground for a business building among the very best residences near the heart of the city. Do you recall thereafter the rather rapid invasion of that street of homes by other new business buildings and blocks? Do you recall how some homes stayed and stuck, cramped and squeezed between stores? How some dwelling-

houses were remodeled slightly and turned into headquarters for undertakers or into offices for physicians? How the more prosperous people finally moved out of the squeezed houses, and how their places were taken by less fortunate people? As you recall it, so everybody all over America recalls it. Growing business in the minor cities has driven out the very "best families," and then begun a squeeze upon the poorer families that remained.

Do you wish to see a similar phenomenon in operation in New York City to-day? Go to West Fifty-seventh Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. Do you remember easily within a generation when there were only brownstone residences on either side of this block? The Vanderbilt home on the north corner of Fifty-seventh Street was only one of several well known New York homes on either side of the street. Go look to-day. The millionaires have moved out. The Vanderbilt mansion is being reconstructed. Across the street is a skyscraper. Exclusive business buildings with dashing fronts have built in, on either side, occupying already half the ground space. The dwellings left standing are in the sad process of being squeezed out. In another decade business will be sole ruler in that part of Fifty-seventh Street.

Business is no respecter of persons in the matter of commercial invasion. As the wealthy home must move out of the way, so the poor must move or be squeezed; and it is the squeezed portion of the population and the squeezing phenomenon that arrests our attention and causes our outburst, protest, and demand to zone the

city against dwelling. The tragedy of the case is not in being driven out by business but in remaining and having the life of the home squeezed out by business.

Lest you may not recognize fully all the varieties of this squeeze, please look a little further. When business captures the ground floor away from the home, it may invite the dweller up-stairs, and so the home remains in the locality but is forced upward against the sky. Business rules below and on the street and exploits the home in order to meet some of its expenses. This type of exploitation has never been thoroughly looked into, studied, analyzed, brooded over. The legitimacy of a store on the ground floor and a family apartment over the store, for example, has never been questioned seriously. May it not be an unfair business practice, unfair to other business competitors? Is it an ethical building practice? What would far-seeing architects say? What will the coming building code say? Is there not a social derangement, almost amounting to a social disease, induced in the family by a store business which makes a by-product of housing a family?

If you were to go from city to city and photograph all the surroundings of homes caught in the claws of the city squeeze, you would be astounded at how the human family has been pressed out of semblance to a human home by the business squeeze. Squeezed between buildings, squeezed below ground, squeezed skyward, squeezed to the alley, squeezed against the street! And every squeeze a suffocation of the home.

It is remarkable how humans cling to the shreds of old dwelling localities. When business can get along on

its own resources without the bother of home dwellers, it cleans everything and everybody out, root and branch, and converts the space into business. Then a new tenement quarter may arise around the corner overnight, as it were. And homes go skyward and impinge upon one another. Thereupon this tenement district or block enters upon the pathos of a mammoth squeeze between business districts or business blocks on all sides. Wholesale suffocation begins. What though a playground is mercifully injected like oxygen into the dying patient? What though a small park be created two corners down? Business is oblivious. Its own atmosphere blows over the area.

What does the squeeze mean to the American city homes that cannot or will not get out of business precincts? You do not wish to hear about it any more? You have seen it, and heard it preached about, and given money for its amelioration, until you are sick and tired? But wait, have you ever heard it suggested that the homes of all be taken out of the midst of business, as a police measure? Then you will listen a little longer, and perhaps you will gain hope for the remedy by seeing just what the damage is to the home in its present quarters.

The squeeze, first of all, means a terrific exaggeration of all the deprivations that residence in any locality of the city suffers even before the beginning of the bold encroachment of business: small space, little air, little light —three basic physical and psychological factors. These are bad enough, and their evil has perhaps been ventilated sufficiently during the past years.

What has not received enough attention is the pressure and impact of the volcanic might of business itself, in all its variety, upon the delicately sensitive home structure. The gross assumption, on the part of business, of the home's inferiority and subordination to business stands there. The business leviathan overawes the finest product of life, whether that home be poor or rich. Business is the Philistine, and the squeeze is Philistinism exerted upon the home; the home submits, and submission is the frustration of home life.

This assumption of business is bad Americanism. Business, which exists for the American home, does America an incomparable injustice in overawing the home. But the recognition by the home of the overlordship of business is also bad Americanism.

Perhaps the fault, if fault there is, is on both sides. The home should never be there to be squeezed. The place belongs to business. On the other hand, business should not wheedle the home to stay in the squeeze. At any rate, the remedy is retirement of the home from the operating ground of business.

The Perils of Business Streets

Where business reigns, the streets are virtually commandeered for business purposes. Business, in many respects, it seems, is a satisfaction of the masculine primitive instincts, man's substitute for war. The rough-shod tactics of militarism, which ruthlessly breaks homes, is matched by the arrogance of business. "Business is business" has much the same apologetic flavor as "War is hell." At its very worst, so far as the human home is

concerned, business appears to be "hell" just as is war at its best. Nowhere in modern life does the worst side of business appear so openly as in the streets of the city. Look at the picture and see it as it is.

The swirl of traffic down the street of the city is threatening like an oncoming storm, a tornado—its narrow path a dead-line, or a terror at least. The traffic's daily score of mutilation and death comes to be accepted by the public and by the home as the inevitable toll of business, just as death and mutilation on the field of battle are the toll of war. And yet the homes that are squeezed off the ground by business and into the air send their children—for so they must—down to the ground to stretch their limbs, close to the track of the tornado. And just as surely as business is business, so surely will "boys be boys"; and the play spirit of the home meets its sorrows.

The business streets have come to be as dangerous to life and limb as the railway yards or the trackage in the yard of a steel mill, around which a wall is reared. It is as dangerous to cross such streets as to cross grade-crossings of railways, which are made relatively safe by watchmen and automatic bars and clanging bells. But custom is forming a crust over our sensibilities. The public is taking this death-toll as in the Middle Ages it took famine, cholera, and the plague, with frozen terror but with submission and resignation. And no succor is in sight.

The fact may just as well be faced now as a generation from now that for an American home there is no living with city business traffic. Added to the iron

squeeze of the business buildings is this squeeze of business traffic at the threshold of the home, at the rear, and from the alley. But is there a way out? The answer is, yes.

To de-house and de-home the business sections of all our cities will release needed space both to business and to traffic. It does not require a fertile mind to see what a boon it would be to traffic to take all the dwellings, apartments, sleeping-quarters, out of congested business areas. It certainly requires little imagination to see what it would mean to the home to take the peril of the business street from the heart of the household.

The Suburban Movement

Freedom from the squeeze of business and from the consequent perils and discomforts of congested city districts is by no means a new story. The pleasures of space for home-building are as old as cities themselves. The wealthy have had their country homes time out of mind. In America the country estate and country house have figured since colonial days.

But not until electric lines and automotive transport made it possible have the middle-class American families been able to have the shelter of a country home. In the last two decades, however, the ordinary salaried married city worker, if he so desires, has been enabled and persuaded to live in the suburbs. And so one of the social phenomena of our time, the suburban movement so called, is as wide-spread as cities themselves. Every city of twenty thousand inhabitants has its country home suburbs. The larger the city, the more intensive

the movement. When we come to the great metropolitan cities, the suburban movement is one of the best known, most highly favored, most wholesome movements of population in our day.

While as yet the movement of homes to the suburbs has been one of middle-class families with some of the upper class, it is not uncommon to see an occasional real-estate subdivision where the poor have intrenched themselves in comfortable cottages amid the splendors of clean air, space, and sunshine. The home-owning possibility alone has justified the movement. In fact, the whole suburban movement has been generally regarded as one of America's most hopeful revivals of home life.

Replanning the city as a place not to live in is viewed in this discussion as merely the extension of the suburban movement to its logical conclusion by the pressure of public opinion upon business, and by the enforcement of a police measure in cities. The argument for sunshine homes is unanswerable. The terror of squeezed and suffocated homes is undeniable. The thing to be desired is proof that it can be done, taking the last soul out of the business city and giving it a sunshine home. Let us glance a bit at what it would involve to do this.

Zoning the City against Dwellings

Zones in cities, marking localities and areas within which certain things must not be done, are well recognized in the municipal law of the United States. In a residence area, once it is established as a zone, business buildings of certain types are forbidden as a nuisance. Building zones are declared within which building mate-

rials must conform to fire-safe construction. In such fire zones no wooden structures are built. Parking zones are created for and against automobile parking. One-way streets are zones against vehicles going in a certain direction. Drinking-water reservoirs are zoned; school areas are zoned; hospital vicinities are zoned. In fact, there is no doubt of the utility of the principle of zoning nor about its recognition in law.

The housing laws of cities recognize the public health and public morals as proper objects to be safeguarded. It is forbidden to dwell in houses characterized as a menace. It is forbidden to erect dwellings in certain positions. In Washington, D. C., the law forbade certain residences fronting on the alleys of the city, and eviction of about fourteen thousand persons from alleys became imminent. But haste to comply with certain civic demands staved off the eviction.

Between these two principles, viz., the zone within which certain things must not be done, and the housing law forbidding dwellings in certain conditions of menace to health and morals, the squeezed home stands in a plight unrecognized by law.

An application of the zoning principle against the dwelling of persons in certain congested business areas of the city would be sufficient as a beginning to test out the case. A year or three years might be given for readjustment before the zone became effective. The most dangerous districts, the most unqualifiedly business areas, once tried out, would show the value of the principle or the limitations of the policy. That the home would be the gainer there is small doubt. Let us con-

sider a little further whether business itself would be likely to gain, also.

Turning the City Over Completely to Business

We have some idea and index of what it means to business to concentrate it, to segregate it, and give up everything in a certain unit area to that one thing. The great office-building or block, the great department-store, the large wholesale house, are examples of concentration of business, exclusion of dwelling. The steel-mill area, the brick-yard, the lumber-yard, the terminal railway yards are other examples. The rational occupation of the business area by business so as to have a monopoly over the space for business purposes should prove in the long run as profitable for business in general as the office-building is profitable for the exclusive aggregation of particular phases of business.

One or two considerations are worth making in favor of this monopoly. A dwelling-house, or a dwelling apartment, or set of living and sleeping rooms, are so different in function from a building dedicated to business that we may well pause a moment to consider the difference as we think of the present junction of business and households. The dwelling is highly personal, and privacy is its engaging characteristic. Freedom for people to be born, to live, to eat, to cleanse themselves, to be ill in hope of recovery, to die in peace; this wonderful freedom from intrusion is the genius of the home. The business building is public, impersonal. It is the shelter for machine processes or highly routine and mechanical

procedures. The psychology of the workers is not that of persons in homes and households. To blend these two types of building, to bring these two atmospheres together, to constrain the psychology of business by the presence of the psychology of the home, or the psychology and humanity of the home by the presence of the psychology and materialism of business, is to put a burden upon business and a burden upon the home. To give freedom, perfect freedom, to business will help business. To give freedom to the home will make all the difference in the world to the home. Business men of the modern sort appreciate this freedom and will appreciate a monopoly of space, atmosphere, and immediate vicinity for business untrammeled by the near presence of a growing-up family.

Because dwellings are more personal than business buildings, the property rights are more difficult to deal with. This handicaps business extension. The persistence of the squeezed dwelling in business territory is a living instance of the check of the dwelling-place upon business development. Sentiment is strong about a dwelling. But a factory is impersonal; it may always be bought, be torn down, and the site used as desired.

When once business has a clear monopoly on space in the heart of a city, it should feel the impetus of a new type of organization, just as a mill does when it concentrates and reconstructs, just as offices do when they fill an office-building. Among the advantages of zoning against dwelling in cities should be reckoned these great advantages of reorganizing the whole business of a city with respect to newly acquired space at the heart, and

of a monopoly to do business without let or hindrance.

The reorganization of streets would be possible for business purposes. Some park space could be vacated to business because no longer needed for homes. As a great fire usually cleans out a large space, and a new city rises from the ashes; so it is to be expected that the separation of business and dwelling would result in unthought-of improvements in the business efficiency of a city.

Tradition has held the squeezed home and growing business together. In a period of reconstruction like the present, such a great change in custom is timely. It is exceedingly dubious whether tradition has anything more back of its custom than the tendency to hold on to the past. Whether dwellers can be provided economically with buildings and space close enough to their work we shall try to consider next.

Housing the City Workers in Suburbs

Is there dwelling room in suburbs for all city workers? Can workers get to and from their city work? Will there be a loss in business efficiency when the man-labor lives far out and daily moves back and forth? Will not transportation prove an impossible burden? What will become of such public facilities as schools, churches, libraries, theaters? Many such questions rise to meet us. They can be answered only by engineers. But let us prepare the way by some discussion.

Is there room outside cities? We are especially concerned with the 287 cities of twenty-five thousand inhab-

itants and over. In 1920, the U. S. Census informs us, there are 143 cities with a range from twenty-five thousand to fifty thousand inhabitants; seventy-six cities from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand; forty-three cities from one hundred thousand to two hundred and fifty thousand; thirteen cities from two hundred and fifty thousand to five hundred thousand; nine cities from five hundred thousand to one million; three cities from one million up.

Of course no one knows how many square miles of concentrated ground-floor space will take care of business in cities of these different grades, when the dwellings of workers are removed. And it is not necessary to know in order to start our thinking. Let us take an arbitrary unit of space for the business of a city of twenty-five thousand people. Suppose we set aside four square miles as a business zone. Let us allow four persons to a dwelling. Give each dwelling half an acre of ground space. Then the city of twenty-five thousand will require as it stands not more than five square miles for residence floor space.

If there be added to the proposed business zone of four square miles on all sides three fourths of a mile for residence, there would be available eight square miles, five of which could go to dwelling space and three to streets and parks. The farthest dwelling would be within three miles and a half of the business center and the nearest dwelling within one mile.

A city of fifty thousand can be given a business zone of ten square miles and a residence suburb of sixteen square miles, with the farthest dwelling five miles from

the business center and the nearest a mile and three quarters.

Giving a city of two hundred and fifty thousand a business zone of forty-nine square miles and a residence district of eighty-two square miles would put the farthest dwelling less than twelve miles from the business center and the nearest less than four miles.

In a city of one million people, having a business zone of 196 square miles and a dwelling area of 320 square miles around it, the farthest dwelling would be twenty-three miles distant from the center of the business zone and the nearest seven miles.

To accommodate the thirty-seven millions of people dwelling in the 287 cities would require suburban land to the amount of something over fourteen thousand square miles, an area equivalent to one quarter of the State of Florida.

The big economic problem is that of transporting the workers daily to and from the business area, distances ranging from three to twenty-three miles. This is a technical matter in engineering; it would be folly for us to venture a plan. Beyond the belief that American skill is equal to the problem it is unwise in this discussion to go. History has shown us that it is safer to believe in the triumphs of transportation than to believe in its impotency.

The vast projects of house-building, street-making, sewers, electric lighting, gas, can be easily seen as mighty obstacles. But Americans require chance for mighty deeds. This proposal has a dauntless element in it, a challenge both to philanthropy and to business.

Only an enterprise as big as this to save the American home will lift the human elements in American life above the strapping shoulders of business. This project would give a new point of view to almost every civic problem. It would freshen American living.

CHAPTER XII

DEFENDING FARM LIFE

IS the defense of farm life properly a problem?

It would seem so. In any era of the nation, agriculture must have its personnel. The competition for workers among all industries is keen, so keen in fact that a net annual movement of a million agricultural population from farms to cities in America is not an unheard-of event.

The problem of holding an efficient, contented farm population on the land, sufficient in numbers and qualified in skill to produce the nation's food needs, becomes, in part, a problem of keeping the fundamental advantages of farm life before the public mind. Here is where a discriminating press can render great service, and where an unthinking, uncaring press can do irreparable damage to farm life without being aware of doing damage at all.

But much more than the advantages must be kept before the public. Every bit of progress in lessening the disadvantages of farm life must be recorded and given wide circulation when it is news. Just how to present the advantages which appeal to the class of people that is needed on farms, and how to give currency to the improvement of those conditions which have always given

rise to adverse criticisms on farm life, makes a problem worthy of the mettle of any editor. If we can successfully give a glimpse at the line of defense that may be put up by a discriminating press, we shall do all that is required of us here.

The Source of a Sure Living

The first great advantage of farming, from the point of view of the family and perhaps especially of the woman in the farm home, is that farming provides a sure living.

If a family cannot make a living on a farm, it is questionable whether it can make a living at anything. Dire poverty is not, in America at least, a feature of farm life as it is of city life. This holds true, whether the family is in the position of owning a farm, renting a farm, or working for wages on a farm. The farm family eats, is sheltered, is warmed, and always is in possession of a job.

This characteristic of farm life, a sure living, will especially appeal to the home-maker and mother of a family. To be free from the worry of "losing the job" is, for the woman at least, to enjoy life day by day, if life has any joys, without the dark cloud of a lost job, an empty cupboard, no money to pay next month's rent, no fuel in the bin.

In the city, the illness of the breadwinner may bring the storm from the cloud; on the farm, illness of the man does not mean giving up the job. Others in the family can carry on the work and thus bridge over the illness.

Many a woman, reared on a farm but marrying into a

city-working home, has felt the strain of life just at the point of an assured living. And there are thousands of women, at least, with whom the one great advantage of a sure living for all in the home will overcome all objections there may be to farm life.

Let a Maryland farm woman tell her own view of this matter:

My daughter will have a better home on the farm than she could have in the city as the wife of a modest-salaried man, whom she would be likely to marry. The farm home we occupy could not be found within the city limits except in some such suburb as Chevy Chase, near Washington, D. C., and a house there of its size, with our lawn and garden plot, would cost a sum of money utterly out of reach of any but people of great wealth. Our home is a large, well-built, comfortable farm-house with the modern conveniences found on most good farms to-day.

She never will have to worry about the actual necessities of life, although luxuries may be wanting.

She will have plenty of the sort of food necessary to make strong, healthy bodies for her family (and morals depend a great deal on vigor of body).

Few indeed are the years on the farm when there is not some surplus money above actual living needs. When the property is paid for, this money can nearly always be counted on to provide something to make life seem even more worth living. For instance, we have an automobile, travel is not unknown to us, and we have, generally, a higher standard of actual comfort in living than our city friends and relatives. (Yet they pity me!)

No matter what may happen, there is always the property itself for a fresh start, a new chance every spring. The farm

owner is never jobless and, though many times short of cash, is never a candidate for the poorhouse.

Affording a Health Environment

It has never been successfully contradicted that the farm provides an environment for health unequaled by the city. The statistics of the army draft did not overthrow the general tradition that country life is healthful. The few detached investigations of country schoolchildren, while disclosing the presence of certain minor physical defects, especially with eyes, throat, nose, and teeth—entirely preventable by skilled attention—do not throw any doubt upon the healthful environment of country life.

The fact is that a life in sunshine, in drafts of fresh air, in zones of quiet, in plenty of space, in contact with nature, is simply unmatchable for basic health. It is health environment *par excellence* for man as for plant or animal.

No emphasis on city parks, city gymnasiums, city medical service, newspaper health columns, city sanitation, and city conveniences—splendid as they all are—can throw dust in our eyes about the basic advantages of free sunlight, air, space, and quiet found in quantities in farm life. The high price of these much-sought-after goods of life in the city is itself ample proof of their basic value. The goal of city engineering is to give sunlight, air, space, and quiet where they are most needed.

So serious is the deficiency in these basic health factors of the city as a dwelling-place organized along with

business that we have urged replanning the city as a place not to live in. Persons who are accustomed to look forward in life to the effects upon their homes of possessing the basic standard things of life will know the difference between the basic health advantages of farm life and the acquired advantages of city life.

An Occupation of Undoubted National Service

Does it or does it not matter to one whether one's occupation fits into a scheme for national well-being? Is that what we mean by an honorable calling, fitting in to well-being? And do men and women prize special honor in occupations?

No doubt many men listen to the call of honor in life-work. And no doubt that call of honor is more and more based upon service, real service to the nation. The ideal of service in occupation has filtered into life and settled into the mass so that the "white wing" street cleaner, in keeping a clean street, holds his head up because he is aware of doing great public service. In a democracy the lowly hold their self-esteem through service; and consciousness of public service to the nation and to humanity is a sort of psychic wealth, which, like a good conscience or a good character, is held as a precious possession.

Agriculture may almost, without stretching the literal truth, be viewed as in the public service; if not bearing the same formal relation to government as the army and navy, or even the National Guard, still under government protection and encouragement, because it is so basic. To grow food and fiber for a nation seems none

the less a great public service and function because it is organized as a private business. It seems too important an element in national existence, not to say well-being and progress, to allow to depend solely for its development upon the ebb and flow of unencouraged private supply and demand. Statesmen of the higher type regard agriculture, therefore, as under the ken of the government, against even momentary decline. Thus agriculture ranks with the military arm as national service.

The service character of farming is distinctly a part of the farmer's inner view of his work. He glories in his job's being beyond question. As the crops of his fields stand open to the passer-by, as his cattle and sheep are silhouetted against the sky for the gaze of any one who may wish to see, so his business throughout is an open book. How different from the businesses done in dark corners! How different from businesses of questionable character on the border-land of propriety! An open book! Service in the open, for all people, for the poor as well as the rich, for whosoever is hungry and is in need to keep soul and body together!

In the defense of farm life, service, public service, national service, will stand against many gibes!

Furnishing Ideal Home Conditions

Men and women of a domestic temper who look forward to home-making and home-living as the largest goal in life may well consider farm life as furnishing ideal home conditions. The farm is the ideal native place. If all children could be born in farm homes in

close contact with nature at large and brought up to adolescence on farms in connection with farm work, the nation would be better off. If the rights of children can be taken into account before they are born—the right to be brought up in space, in sunshine, under the broad sky—then farm life should enter the thinking of all who are of a domestic turn of mind. A look into the situation will lighten up the advantages.

While health environment will figure largely in this set of ideal home conditions—this factor we have already considered—it is a question whether even this basic element outranks one other; namely, the opportunity for children to be initiated into life through the processes of work. The farm provides grades of work adapted to the tender years of children. Boys and girls can both find employment suited to their years which will supplement the school in an education that is an actual apprenticeship to life. Work is man's salvation. The work habit is one of the triumphs of civilization.

The attempt to rear a family in the city, with no outlet for the energies of the children in useful labor, is one of the domestic problems of the city in our day. Failure is nearly sure to be the result. The alternative is premature work for children as wage-earners, without education.

The home itself—father, mother, children, and some other relatives like grandmother, uncle, or distant cousin—is a well knit social fabric, if it is a farm home. Two conditions make it so. One is work itself, which we have touched on with respect to the children. Everybody works. And they work at related tasks, close to

the hearth, close to the dinner-table. The product is a common product. Their interest in land, home, capital, and products is unified. This interest is spread also from grandfather to grandchild in the life of the grandfather. On the other hand, in city life, the home is kept together, if at all, by sheer resourcefulness. The social forces and work forces of the city are distracting.

The farm home is the original home. It lays claim to being still the normal home. Not all persons are home-bodies, home-makers. Not all women, even, care pre-eminently for a successful home life. But for those persons who are domestic, heart and soul, the farm offers the largest opportunity in America for a successful home.

A letter from a Vermont farm woman to her daughter rings true to the American farm woman's belief in the future of the farm home:

Dear Mary:

Your letter saying that there is nothing that you "want so much as a chance at farm life with David" makes us very happy.

We have had some quiet amusement over Aunt Florence's objections. From her standpoint, they are natural enough. One is born "rural-minded" or one is not. Her views have been distorted by newspaper, magazine, stage, and government statistics proving (?) the drudgery of farm life. Happily you realize its beauty and value.

Life's values are not measured by such standards as ease of living, fashionable clothes, and carefully tended hands. Service makes living beautiful. There is no reason why a farm woman should neglect her personal appearance. Your splen-

did health and David's, with your fine ideals for home and community life, would make you shine anywhere.

Both of you love to work and are especially adapted to country living. Your tastes are domestic. Your love for animals and gardening will make you in sympathy with David's ventures in crops and cows. You delight to see the sun rise!

Both of you understand that it is the discipline of the farm, the insistence of its duties, the certainties of its penalties and the great fact that you are working with nature in the things that make the world go, that make the farmer a broad, self-reliant, forceful individual. Strength is refreshed daily because he is dealing with the elemental facts of life.

David's social instincts match yours. Denied the finest lectures, concerts, dramas, your opportunities will be great for helping to secure worth-while recreation for a large, scattered, needy group. School and church need your help. I believe with Bailey that "a man cannot be a good farmer unless he is a religious man."

"The fellowship of the productive life," says Carver, "does not offer the insult of a life of ease or esthetic enjoyment or emotional ecstasy. It offers, instead, the joy of productive achievement, of participation in the Kingdom of God." Read it with David.

Do not be disturbed because you cannot start with all of the labor-savers. Things were shabby when *we* began. Half the fun of having "things" is in working intelligently for them. You will have a fairly convenient house, running water, and a good wood-pile! Father jokes about my measuring a man by water and wood, but there is more in it than appears.

Your small musical talent enriches your life. Rosalie has real talent. I feel as certain that she should not marry a farmer as that you should, since it is to be David. When she considers marriage, I hope that she will find her husband

among one of the other honorable professions. Note the "other." There is no more honorable profession than farming; but each for the niche for which he is best fitted to play his part in the world.

Providing a Career for Women

The modern woman thinks she has a natural right to the joys of a career, an occupation, a line of creative effort, over and above the responsibilities of home-making. However this contention may be decided finally, true it is, and it is worth stating here, that farm women have always had an occupation in addition to home-making.

They are in line with the modern demand of women, therefore. They have found themselves able to rear a family and also to take part in the occupation of agriculture. In this occupation they have found engrossing interest. Not only have they had a hand in earning the livelihood of the home, but they have had the joy of an intellectual interest in the miracles of growth about them. This interest in the business of farming has been a relief from the routine of housekeeping and home care. A more capable, a more resourceful woman has been the result of this business interest.

It is not uncommon to find an unmarried woman owning and operating a farm. The unmarried woman in agriculture, it has been demonstrated, can find an outlet to a large business ability and a considerable surplus of energy. Fruit raising, dairying, poultry keeping, bee keeping, and many other forms of agriculture are especially adapted to the skill and tastes of women, and

many unmarried women can make a decided hit at these forms of land working.

Farm life offers no inducement to the weak-kneed, the idle, the mentally and physically soft woman. But to the vigorous, the capable, the domestic, there is the inducement of something over and above the home, and yet akin to it, to engage the life.

A Missouri farm woman plainly states the farm woman's work creed:

> Agriculture offers the oldest and finest profession known. To till the land and raise live stock to eat the feed that the farm produces, to send out the food that the other half of the world requires, is a service without which life itself could not endure.
>
> I love the farm, and I had rather be known as a farm woman than by any other name. I want to spend every bit of my strength and intelligence and every day of my life making farming more alluring. I find keenest zest in the fight that we farmers must make, if we are to secure the right future for our work.
>
> Why should I wish my daughter to be any less blessed, or to have to be satisfied with serving a lesser cause?
>
> I want my daughter to marry a farmer. I hope, if she is so fortunate, that he may be college or university trained. I hope he may regard agriculture as man's divinest vocation, worthy of the thoughtful and best effort of the highest intelligence. With my daughter as a real partner, I should wish him to work to make farming the most respected of professions and farm life happier.
>
> I want my daughter to bear hardships more bravely, not to be relieved of them; to meet difficulties more sturdily; to face motherhood as the "heritage of the Lord." I want her to

help build a home in which children may grow, who will some day carry on the ideals and continue the service that I shall have to leave unfinished.

The banker may succeed and his wife know nothing of his business; the farmer's wife must be a helper. I glory in the character that such a partnership develops in a woman. I wish my daughter to know the conscious joy of it.

Coming to Possess Modern Social Facilities

The new farmer who is displacing the pioneer type, the hoe type, the traditional static type, is in possession of modern facilities for convenience and comfort in housing, for ease and comfort in transportation, for community education, religious meetings, recreation, and health. That is, it rests with the farmer now whether he will have these home facilities, and it rests with the farm community whether it will have the social facilities. In other words, there is no longer in the nature of farm life in America a bar to the possession of facilities for comfort, social life, and culture. And so many farm communities in every State have solved the problem of social facilities so satisfactorily that facilities can already be listed as an advantage in farm existence.

The middle-aged city capitalist who happened to have been raised on a farm a generation ago may still think that farm life carries with it of necessity a meager, lonely, and sterile existence. His memory may be good. But his information is not up to date. Farming possesses potentially all the basic social advantages of city life and industry; many farming communities possess these social and cultural advantages in reality; many others have begun to equip themselves; while a few

farm communities in the United States are unstirred by the good news of the country life movement, which promises that all farm communities may have the basic social advantages of the most favored community.

The good roads movement is making the automobile effective in reducing all country distances so much that distance may now be eliminated as an inevitable barrier to social life on the farm. Distance now becomes an advantage. Space and quiet mean retirement to life, to thought, to pleasure, and not separation from all that people love.

Hope is in the trend. The new farming is bringing the new home. New farm homes are bringing the new rural schools. The new rural schools are making possible all other advantages. A Virginian lets you into her experience:

I was born and raised on a farm but grew up knowing absolutely nothing about it. My parents, educated, cultivated Virginians of the old school, were not disposed to let me go over the place. If I ever so much as put foot in the barn lot, my father said, "Now, little daughter, run to the house with your mother." There were few good roads, no cars, not many telephones, so the farm was jail to me; I hated it. By the time I was grown I would willingly have given my interest in the home place to anybody that would accept. The beautiful meadows, the orchard, the cool, deep woods—none of it for me. But then came a change. My mother died. Father was an invalid, and my own health was bad. He and I spent a winter in the city, and there the scales fell from my eyes. I saw his longing for the old home, and I *felt* my longing, so back we came. His joy was indescribable, and mine was almost equal. Life was a revelation to me. How near I had

come to losing the very best opportunities ever offered to me!

I now have happiness, health, content—three blessings I had scarcely known before. There have been innumerable obstacles, but each one overcome has made me stronger. I have gardened, milked, canned, built fences, sheds, split wood—anything to get along—because I loved the farm and was determined to succeed if my efforts would mean success.

Farms can have all the conveniences and comforts of town homes, with the added luxuries of the restfulness of the country. Good roads are becoming prevalent, and automobiles have eliminated distance. My girl's happiness is great to behold, when she comes in from a ride on a load of hay or the tractor-plow, wheat-drill or corn-planter. She knows and goes all the rounds a great deal more at ten years of age than I did at twenty-five. I am raising her to be a good wife for a good farmer, for there is where I believe she will find greatest happiness and usefulness. She will go to him prepared for life as far as I am able to teach her and have her taught. Oh, if I could only make people realize how full of possibility is the country life and how rich in blessings!

What of the Disadvantages?

In defending farm life, and in displaying the basic advantages that are superior to any, it is not wise, it is not truthful, to assert that these advantages will produce happiness. These advantages, great as they are, will not prevent nor neutralize the many trials incident to life itself, whatever one's occupation or living-place. Life is charged with disappointment, unforeseen and unpreventable disease, accident, uncongenial marriage. The frailties inherent in life itself must be laid at the door of life, not farm life.

Farm life cannot be held responsible for the illusions

which beset man, which make him think that some other occupation or some other living-place holds in store for him the ideal, and which make him an unhappy wanderer. Personal tragedy, one might almost say, enters life by every door.

But there are disadvantages to farm life that are of an honorable character from whatever angle one views it. Not every one has the rugged physique required. Many occupations are therefore superior to farming for those of a physical heritage of less endurance. It is patent that in accommodating one's work to abilities and tastes, the vast array of occupations offer to a person competing inducements that cannot be gainsaid. Only those who revel in the freedom of outdoor life should think of farming.

But still we must admit the presence at this moment of real disadvantages even in the view of those who would like to farm. These have been somewhat considered by us and set aside lightly as deficiencies in social facilities which are not inherent in farm life itself, but rather belong to a tradition and a period of frontiering that is rapidly breaking up and giving way. This sort of disadvantage is more prevalent in some regions of the United States than others. The lack of surfaced highways arranged into community systems, the lack of hospitals, of high schools, of libraries, of first-class trading centers, of noble churches, of organized recreation—these lacks and deficiencies are still so real in many places that it requires a great hope to wait for a full tide of social facilities to come.

All that can be urged at this point is that those who

tire and despair—well, let them go. Those who believe and have a store of energy, let them come and let them stay and let them put their brains at work, and the face of the land will begin to smile just as in spring it smiles with flowers. Most of the basic disadvantages of farm life will melt away, awaiting only this determined hope and a social mentality.

The Present Agricultural Depression

But it will be said, in fact, it is being said quite pointedly every day, "There are too many million bushels of wheat raised in America, too many farms, too many farmers, and too many farm homes." A sigh of relief goes up around the national breakfast-table when in the morning news one reads that half a million people left the farms last year. "Less farm production," "higher prices to farmers"—perhaps living prices for farm products to those who remain on the farms—"more people to feed in the cities," "less distress on the farm," "less worry for statesmen over discontented farmers," are the net result. Under the circumstances, is there any need of a defense of farm life? Would we not be better employed in pointing out the drawbacks to farming and to a life in the country?

The answer is unmistakable: The danger to the nation has always been that, in any time of loss of farm population, it might be the good farmers who would go, the most intelligent, the most experienced, and those possessing the best country traditions. That danger exists to-day. The loss of two million farm people in itself is not regrettable. In fact, it may be the best way out;

but the nation could ill afford to lose even one million of its very best farm people. This is the reason why every farm family that is tempted to sell out now under fire and the strain of bad times should count over the blessings of farm life before making the decision to jump to the city. The depression of agriculture is temporary. There are many farm workers so situated that they can go to the city without involving the break-up of a long-established farm home. Let these go. But let the economist who is about to advise farmers promiscuously to sell out and go to the city take counsel with his heart and advise cautiously. For it takes a long time to produce a good farmer, and the country community can least afford to lose its leadership in bad times; the nation would not be the least loser in such a case.

CHAPTER XIII

MOVEMENT OF POPULATION TO AND FROM FARMS

THE movements of races from land to land have afforded the anthropologist and the historian the makings for their books. Romance, tragedy, civilization; war, conquest, oppression, absorption; the rise and fall of nations; the creation and extinction of cultures. Migration, immigration, emigration, suffocation of peoples, enrichment of peoples, will ever be themes for thinkers. The mixing of the human ingredients, whether by single atoms or by molecules, will furnish forth the new type alongside the old. With these interracial, international points of view everybody is more or less familiar. We know the usual motives; we know the general results. Within our own national borders, however, we have population movements which vitally concern the welfare of the nation and with which we are not very fully acquainted. It is the purpose of this discussion to consider one of these internal movements, and to see what we can see, even though we cannot hope to see all that is going on.

Movements Adjusting to Occupation

Vocation, work for a livelihood, occupation so called, is, in America at least, always on trial. It is like the

American farm, always for sale or exchange, simply awaiting an attractive price. America's youth, the wealth of opportunity still connected with all phases of enterprise, provide the conditions for a real competition among occupations, not simply for unskilled workers, but for skilled managers, proprietors, and investors. This competition, accompanied by wide advertisement, by announcement of great opportunities, makes its attack upon the man who is working under difficulties in his own vocation and upon the man who is ambitious. Wide-spread education has given many men the basic training for more than one kind of job.

Farming is in this competition along with the business and professional enterprises of the city. Young men reared on farms, coming to an age of decision as to a life-work, start in naturally with farming. In the course of a few years they become dissatisfied with their work, and change to city work. Taking the United States as a whole, the number of men and women leaving the farm for the city because of dissatisfaction with the work and the occupation must amount to a considerable item. This movement will be a stream, we may surmise, of fairly regular proportions, augmented in times of agricultural depression, diminished in periods of agricultural prosperity. Whether this stream flows by way of the village and small town to the cities, or directly to the major cities, we surmise but do not exactly know.

Partly compensating for this loss to farming of farmers who decide to become city enterprisers, is a return stream to the farm of young men who prefer farming to

city business, and of some farm-bred men who find the city a difficult place to work in and decide to go back where they know what they can depend upon. This return stream of men trying to adjust themselves to a business which they can enjoy and do best in, is presumably—no one knows with accuracy for any portion of the country—smaller than the stream toward the city. In these two streams will be young unmarried women as well as young men. Some young women go to the town with the same motive as the young men; they prefer work that is not farming. Some go because they prefer the new woman's independent type of life, in connection with an unmarried woman's type of city occupation. A few young farm women constantly leave farming by the marriage route with young men of the town; and a return stream of brides from town is partial compensation. It would add greatly to our knowledge of the interrelations of farm and city, town and country, to have these two streams surveyed, charted, and mapped, so to speak, for the United States as a whole.

There is another adjustment to the occupational features that must engage our notice at this point. The newness of America has brought within the domain of farming itself a severe competition among different localities in the same State and among different States. Types of farming are competitors with one another. Types of land compete for farmers. Low-priced farms compete with high-priced farms. An active, indeed a most surprising and astounding mobility, not to say instability, of farm people has characterized American

farming for the past one hundred years. Though new, cheap lands are almost gone, still the movement from farm to farm continues. In tenant farming, the movement is especially conspicuous, though the movement may be only from farm to farm within the same county. The Eastern farmers went west, then south; now Middle-West farmers are going east and south. In the border States of the Northwest farmers in the settled southern parts will go to newer northern parts. These currents and cross-currents of farm families trying to adjust their farms to their likings are full of importance to the progress of the farm population up the hill of culture and attainment. These streams await the chart, compass, and map. These adjustments to occupation, to type of work, are such as are causing an attempt to better working conditions.

There are other movements which, though changing the farmer to a townsman or the townsman to a farmer, are related to other motives more strongly than to mere ambition to get on in business.

Movements Adjusted according to Age

A steady stream of young men and women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four are moving from the farm homes to city life seeking their fortunes. They cannot be farmers. They are a surplus. They are those members of their families least desirous of remaining on farms, and so they go into the cities, where they swell the ranks of all classes of occupation. They are the so-called new blood and energy given by farm life to city life and labor. They supply many men and women

of note, statesmen, governors, captains of industry; women of letters, wives of bankers, physicians. Although we do not know with sufficient accuracy to make a statistical estimate, we have assurance that this surplus of adolescents reaches about half the annual national crop of rural young men and women graduating from childhood to business careers. The implications of the free gift of the farm to the city are far-reaching and will finally be taken into account by economists, sociologists, and statesmen when a rational, statistical balance is effected between the opportunities of farm people and city people.

The back-flow of adolescents from the city to the farm has never been calculated. It has probably been underestimated. Because of the cityward movement of adolescents from many a farm home, title to farms often falls into the hands of city people through the very natural process of inheritance. In some of these cases, undoubtedly, a door is open for the return of land-loving youth from the city to the old homesteads. Not enough is known about this movement to estimate its volume or to value its contribution to farm life and culture. Here again chart, compass, and map are needed. Are there periodic cycles in this movement? Nobody knows. Rise in the value of farm lands, prosperity in farming, may increase the flow. Nobody knows.

It is hardly necessary to mention the annual flow away from farm homes to high school, college, and university or training-schools. Temporarily, at least, it takes out of the community much of the energy of the youth. But some of these are flowing back in a constant rivulet.

This movement means much to the mental side of farm life. An ambassador is at the court of learning. He gives, but he also takes, and hands it on to his home.

One of the most talked-about movements, but one that is perhaps little known after all, is that age adjustment known as the retired farmer movement. The farmer reaches an age when his physical ability to cope with farm problems is found wanting. Whatever his ambition may be, whatever his likes may be, he must unload his burden. Then begins a new adjustment. Some study on this phase of farm life goes to show that the farmer shifts his burden little by little and eases himself by degrees. Instead of jumping to town or city on the first consciousness of failing strength, he tries various expedients, holding on, giving up his duties one by one, dividing his farm, selling or renting a part or buying a smaller farm, ever moving nearer town, until all the way to town he goes. This phenomenon of retiring to the city because of age turns out to be a sort of dilatory retreat under pressure. But the end usually comes in town or city. The stream is a constant, slow-moving current. It carries the glories of autumn; it carries the tragedies of sleety storms. The human tale of this retreat has not yet been written. The statistics of this movement will illuminate, when fully known, the passing of many a title-deed from farm community to city enterprise.

There is a certain return trickling back to the land from the city, because of the retirement from the arduous labors of city industry. The trickle is in no sense comparable, however, either in its numbers or in its effects

upon farm life, to the retreat of the aged farmer. It is wasteful to continue guessing and surmising our facts about these age movements. We are all eager for information about the movements hither and yon of raw materials—coal, copper, wheat, cotton, iron. Business depends on knowledge. But good relations in life, especially group life and class life, depend upon knowledge, too.

Movements Related to Health and Pleasure

The farmer is becoming acquainted with the climate of Florida and California, or Colorado and Montana. The prosperous farmer becomes a health-seeker, a mild climate hunter. He seeks, after his years of labor, even while his basic energies are still in their prime, the gentler winters of the favored States or advertised regions. The automobile is brought into play, perhaps, for a long trip south or west. The farmer as an active climate seeker, still holding title to his farm, still considering himself a real "dirt farmer," is evidence of a rise in social and economic status. Here is no peasant glooming around the hearth-fire; here are a man and woman who say, "Lo, there is California! Oranges, roses, sunshine, warmth. Let 's go."

And they can go. And they do go. And they come back. And they work the farm and talk about California. They talk about the Mission Play, earthquakes, Tia Juana, the reunion of Iowans or New Yorkers (most of them farmers back home). They talk about farmer high schools, and compulsory education up to the eighteenth year. They carry back some of the bignesses of

life in the Far West to their little farm communities farther east. To know this movement better would assist us to understand the farmer as a human being, and take some of the curse from our thinking him "queer."

A second movement away from farms and farming is not so complimentary to farm life. This is the movement to town of parents with children from the age of eleven to fifteen years, for the sheer purpose of giving these children a proper education. The decision is not always foreseen by parents. Children come, and the years of infancy are so long, so perilous, so full of anxiety that parents hardly realize the children are almost grown, until it comes to them with the force of an earthshock. They then decide to move for a few years. They move to educate, and sometimes they never come back. Sometimes they return disappointed with life. Sometimes they come back with renewed love for the farm. As the educational ideal grows among farmers, one of two things happens: either proper schools are established among farmers, or more good farmers leave farms and go to town to educate their children. This movement, while perhaps not totally bad for farming, is certainly a menace to farming; for it takes away the best people, just when they are of value to the community, for a purpose which, in most instances, could be met by community action at home. The rapid incoming of grade schools and high schools for farm children will, it is to be hoped, lessen this movement, which is an adjustment to the happiness of farm families. How sadly we need in America a survey of this movement!

Going away to be near schools, or to be near hospitals, or physicians, or libraries, is a going which our generation will surely check.

Touring, travel, sight-seeing, not for health, not to get a better farm, but for plain pleasure, curiosity about America, information, culture, to break the grind of labor, are in good farm form and in general vogue.

"Back where I was born."

That 's the story.

"I just wanted my boys and girls to see where I went to school. Not that I did n't want to see the old place myself, for I did. But I wanted the pleasure of showing it to my children."

No peasant here. No sticking to one mountain-side or plain all one's life. Here is getting about. Here is the impetus to compare conditions.

Seasonal Labor Movements

Agricultural laborers are of several kinds: the all-year-round type; the spring, summer, and fall type; the seasonal type. The last two types are subject to considerable movement. Moving on to a farm in early spring, quitting in late autumn, one type lives possibly in town or city during the winter or just hibernates on some farm. The seasonal laborer, such as the wheat or harvest hand of the wheat belt, the beet-sugar workers, the berry pickers, and the like, move out of everywhere and nowhere, mobilize on farms, do their job, and evaporate again. The story has been told, but not thoroughly. We need to see the stream dispersing as well as assem-

bling. We need to know its social as well as its economic bearing.

Movements of Teachers and Clergymen

Everybody knows, after a fashion, that the rural teacher force is a mobile body of young women. Just where they emanate from and where they go to no one has told us. The material is ready for a more definite knowledge of this movement. All that is necessary is making a statistical assemblage of school data. The movement away from rural schools is so vital that we should know it better. The charge is often made that city-bred girls are teaching country children city ways. We should see just how this stands. The windings of the stream need charting.

What is true of rural teachers has been more or less true of rural ministers. Young men move in and serve rural churches. Soon they move on, and then they move out of the rural domain. This movement of rural leaders in and out needs not only a quantitative estimation but a rational explanation.

The Problem of the Population Movements

So long as America's knowledge of these movements to and from farms and farm communities is purely casual, glimpsed here and there, observed in spots only, never accurately measured, never reduced to scientific terms, America will not know the problem in any convincing manner. It has been assumed in times gone by that losses of population from agriculture were a menace,

being a symptom of something decidedly wrong with rural society and with the nation's treatment of the farmer. The alarm created by a decrease in rural population has been one of our national nightmares. "The farm people are leaving the farms; how can we hold them?" This has been the editorial year after year.

There has been no discriminating analysis of who is leaving, or why he is leaving, or whether any one is coming in, or why any one should come in. A rational adjustment to occupation, resulting in a decline of the number of farmers, may be a good thing for farm and town. But who knows the difference between a rational and an illusory, foolish adjustment? Who is prepared to assist in the matter of adjustment? Ah! Here is where we need our exact knowledge. There are those fitted to advise, if only they knew the facts in the case. To facilitate adjustment to the kind of occupation for which one's ability and training equip him, is a good thing. A really good farmer turned into a poor merchant, garage man, or factory foreman is a shame and a pity. A poor farmer who could be a good contractor should go to the city. It is poor politics, poor economics, poor statesmanship, to advise all farmers to farm, all industrialists to stick to their jobs whether or no.

The movement to cities of a surplus of the adolescents is, perhaps, the most significant national movement of people from the farms. The problem here, again, is to know what is happening; to know how it stands in point of quantity; to know whether it is taking care of itself

in a reasonable, sane, healthful way. If one child must go as a surplus and one must stay, the important thing is to have the right one and not the wrong one go. It is not necessary that one from each family should go. Two may go from one family, two stay in another. To make the social break in family and community life with good results to farm family, farm community, and city industry and community, it should take place under a knowledge of just what it is that is happening, and just what the effects are. The life and energy of the nation may depend upon the functioning of this social force.

When we come to the matter of retiring to town, we are dealing with a complex situation. We plainly do not know the full facts nor the full results for the United States as a whole. The problem here appears to be one of knowledge of the facts, knowledge of the stream of retreat, motives, movement of title and properties to town with the retiring farmer, the farmer's willingness to go to town if he should have easy access to church, physicians, hospital, library, entertainment from his farm home.

The other movements, because of pleasure, search for health, seasonal labor, flux of teachers and clergy, present first of all a problem of knowledge. It is a mere case of guessing to block out a series of problems, grave or minor, when nothing is actually known about these movements. This discussion leads up to the stone wall of ignorance. We need to know these great movements in detail. That is, we need the statistics of the movements; we need the economics of the movements; we need

the social influences of the movements. Let us briefly face the problem.

A Study of the Movements of Population

Who could make a worthy study of movements to and from farms? The answer is, any great national agency with a sympathy for farm life and a sound national life: the Farm Bureau; a congressional commission; the Department of Agriculture; a research foundation; any state experiment station.

How long would it take to compass such an investigation? The reply is at random: one year for a mind to get thoroughly saturated with the situation and, by a nation-wide reconnaissance, to gain clues that might be followed; one year for a series of correspondence inquiries covering the length and breadth of the land through the establishment of a list of fifty thousand cooperators; one year for representative field studies of an intensive character designed to test out the results obtained by correspondence; three years for assembling and publishing the results.

What would be the final aim of the study? This is a hard question. But whatever else were aimed at, it should be to chart the streams, currents, tides of these movements for the United States. The navigator has his seas charted and mapped. He knows the constant currents. He knows when to expect his incoming tide, and the outgoing one. He knows what happens when a storm period breaks. In some such fashion, the farmer, the merchant, the banker, the statesman, should come to

know the constant forces that produce constant currents of persons moving here or there. They should know the routes and the causes. They should be able to forecast extraordinary movements.

Such a detailed knowledge of the internal migrations of persons to and from farms will illuminate every social, economic, and political problem affecting agriculture and farm life. Theory will welcome revision on the basis of facts.

This crude analysis of the movements of our farm population, and this plea for study, will at once suggest to the general economist, general sociologist, and general political scientist the value of a detailed graphic picture of the movements of the whole population of the United States. The presence of cities grading from the village to the metropolis, the fact that major cities and "greater city" areas have parts within parts, groups within groups, all suggest that the problem of movement from one grade to another, one group to another, one occupation to another, one residence area to another, contains, hidden in its labyrinthine complex, the key to understanding many of our national ills, and the key to national remedy.

CHAPTER XIV

RURAL LIFE IN AMERICAN ART

"ART has not come to its maturity if it does not put itself abreast with the most potent influences of the world."

So wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson more than a generation ago in his Essay on Art. And whether Emerson was right or wrong, American agriculture is looking to American art to take a place beside her as an ally.

The Hoe Age

The hoe age in agriculture, ancient as the reign of the hoe in the world has been, closed in America some decades ago. The hoe farmer may still be found here and there, but his day is done. In the era when the hoe was king, so tremendous was the bare task of turning the face of the earth over that this feat outweighed every other exploit in agriculture. No wonder the hoe was king.

And no wonder that the pictorial and plastic arts the world over made the farmer the man with the hoe. The farmer thereafter is the man, hoe in hand, with bent back, striking a blow at the weakest point in the earth's crust, pulling upward, loosening the earth's grip upon a portion of the soil, lifting it for a moment, and

finally turning it face over. The momentary mechanical victory is repeated, clod by clod, yard by yard, hour after hour, day after day.

When the hoe man has tamed the ox, marble and canvas show us the ox pulling the hoe, now called a plow, while the hoe man, still eying the earth, holds the plow-hoe in place and goads on the ox. With the hoe man is the hoe woman in the field. At the chiming call to prayer, she ceases toil, bends her head, and thanks God for so much as a hoe. At harvest-time the hoe, now a sickle, slowly cuts down the standing grain, and the hoe woman gleans the straws and heads. There in the hoe age is the solitary shepherd with his herd of sheep; there, the dairymaid with her milk-pail brimming. The hoe man and the hoe woman are on canvas, in marble, in bronze, on mural interiors, in etching, in illustration, in ballad, in elegy, in novel, in drama. In rural art the hoe still rules, while in America, at least, the hoe age in agriculture has disappeared.

What, let us inquire, is the psychology of a hoe art that is not abreast with agriculture itself?

Nature, we must remember, marvelously envelopes agriculture. And the brilliance of nature sheds some radiance upon every rural scene, however unhappy and pitiful the plight of the people in the scene may be. In order, therefore, to appraise rightly the psychology of the hoe in art aside from the glamour of nature, we must take off, as it were, the shining garment of nature from the shoulders of the hoe man and look at the naked hoe in his hands.

Looking intently on that part of the depiction, who

that is versed in peasant life can get away from the sheer fact of toil in that hoe, back-bending, thigh-straining toil? Who can get away from the solitude of life in that hoe? Who can get away from the crude contact with the rough, the staining, the painful, in that hoe? Who can get away from the pathos, the suffering suppressed, the frustration of hope, in the hoe? The cotter's hut goes with the hoe. The hoe means long days of labor. The hoe means woman at man's work. The art of the hoe age depicts the hoe man as he is and hoe agriculture as it is. And with this concession to hoe art, let us pass on to inquire whether there is a successor to hoe art as there is a successor to the hoe man.

The New Rural Life and a New Rural Art

A struggle in America, none the less titanic because not in the public eye, has been going on during the last fifty years to take the hoe out of farming, to dispossess its whole tribe; to take out the hoe hut and the hoe manner of living; to take out the hoe school, the hoe church.

In America the land-worker has slowly struggled to produce a machine to bear the dour brunt of labor; struggled to live like other men, surrounded by institutions which should bring the world to his door-step, that is, bring to his very threshold the commodities, skills, wisdoms, and riches which men desire with longing, just such desirable things as men who work in the most highly favored occupations have and hold dear; struggled to overcome the prejudice of public opinion which has maintained, politely indeed but firmly, that

the farm cannot enrich the soul of a people, that a curse rests upon tillage, and that culture and civilization must be given up when one goes over the threshold of the farm-house.

Success has crowned the first type of struggle, and machine farming has displaced hoe farming. As the hoe man becomes extinct, the farm engineer is taking his place. The second type of struggle, to live like other men, is still keen. No one is wise enough to predict how this struggle will end. The third type of struggle is still more in doubt. America no longer pokes fun at the farmer, to be sure; but America has not yet heartily conceded that a good kind of life is possible on a farm. The eyes of city men and women still mirror the stigma of dirt, toil, ignorance, loneliness, branded into the honor of farming during the hoe age.

We now come to the main question, how American art can come in as an ally of American farming and farm life.

The first answer is this: Let American art put itself abreast with this most potent occupation in America, abreast especially of the extraordinary advances in the occupation. Agricultural science has transformed farming from a traditional craft to a creative process. The pure-bred kernel of wheat, the pure-bred ear of corn, the pure-bred type of hog, sheep, and cow, have come as near to being themselves fine-art products as it is possible for living automatons to be. The scientific skill in breeding, of which Luther Burbank is perhaps the most widely known exponent, though perhaps not the most important, is a species of art designing. The ad-

justment of means to end attained in these pure-bred types is, to a philosophic mind, at least, an example of an idealistic achievement in a material and medium which, while not so gross as marble, bronze, or pigments, because living, is not so tractable, either.

The truth is that the hoe was never the really significant thing about agriculture, even in the hoe age. The hoe made the overpowering impression, it is true, but neither the process nor the tool, neither the hoe nor the machine nor the soil, is the glory of agriculture. It is the living product. It is the living kernel of wheat, the living ear of corn, the boll of cotton, the orange, the apple, the Guernsey milch cow. The product is the farmer's pride, however toilsome the toil may have been. It is his glory to see his achievement living before him. Forgetting the journeys over the fields, forgetting the labors, just to see and show his creation—this has lain in his mind through all the months of waiting.

Here is the first opportunity of art, then; namely, to symbolize this wonderful created thing and to commemorate the moment of joy in the farmer's life when, having made the corn and wheat to leap from the dead earth, he turns over to the world food to keep man going. Once to seize the outstanding thing about present-day agriculture, once to discern the idealism in the high-bred product, will be for art to forswear the hoe and to turn to the spirit of life in agriculture.

If the artist asks whether we wish a machine (alas, alas!) substituted in art for the hoe—a tractor for hoe, ox, and plow; a harvesting combine (reaper and

thresher) for the sickle—we reply: "No. Decidedly no. Keep the machine out of the picture, as a symbol." We in agriculture are not asking for poor art. We do not ask either for a poster or an advertisement of agriculture. We ask for interpretation, for expression of the high emotion wrapped up in the agricultural occupation. Emotion, however, that is not all pathos. We want the glory, the exaltation, of the real achievement of the farmer depicted; cast squarely in the eye of the beholder. Not the glory of the sunset over an irresistibly charming landscape, with the pitiful peasant posture thrown in by way of giving "human interest." Why reserve pathos for the farmer, and express glory in the steed-riding warrior?

Surely the materials of the plastic arts are not so meager that the sculptor must have his hoe or else give up his fountain. Has he not, as he always has had, the episode and the narrative in episodic form? Can he not marshal into this medium the products of agriculture, the heroes and heroines of farming in their relations to the nation without introducing the sweated tool? Was not America on its knees to the farmer a few years ago? Did not the generals and colonels of crop and animal production gird themselves to the great task? Did they not win the plaudits of warrior and statesman? Cannot this obeisance of the élite to the intellectual achievement of the land-worker be set forth with historic emphasis?

In Berlin there is a monument to a great German agriculturist Thaer: a heroic figure surmounting the granite; on the four faces of the granite block, in bas-relief,

four episodes in the life of Thaer: teaching the scientist, soldier, statesman, and farmer about sheep (Thaer was a great sheep man); overseeing the shearing of a flock of sheep; central figure in a harvest scene; receiving recognition from statesman, soldier, citizen. Thaer lived in the hoe age, be it remembered, at a time when Arthur Young in England was putting intellect into farming, when Washington in America was raising the standard of American agriculture. And yet the sculptor minimized the hoe and glorified the product. The impression conveyed is a profound new sense of the meaning of farming.

This all-too-feeble advocacy of a new type of agricultural art will not persuade the artist to forswear the hoe, if he himself does not sense the glory in food-production and especially the triumphant character of the new growth-controlling agriculture. The first artist to feel the idea, to sense the truth, will solve the problem of relegating the tool to its place and bringing forward the central theme. We ask for a worthy symbol of agriculture to displace the hoe. We do not know what form it will take. But we trust the discerning artist's mind to create the symbol.

He who would prepare to put art abreast of modern agriculture must pay a long visit to one of the dynamic centers of agricultural science. He must live in the farm homes of those men and women who have seen the inner meaning of the new farming. He must reside in the farm communities that have become equipped with facilities for living well. He must come to know the new rural school-teacher, the new rural preacher, the new

rural librarian, the new rural nurse, doctor, intern, the new rural legislator, until he is imbued with the new facts as realities and with the new hope of the new rural leaders. Such a preparation in study, no more tortuous and no more exacting than great artists of all ages have imposed upon themselves, will bring forth a great new type of art. But is there any demand for it? What of the market for rural art?

The Market for Rural Art

As the college of agriculture is the intellectual center of the new agriculture in each State, so is it the potential center of American rural art. The college of agriculture is rapidly expanding. A building era is before it. The campus already gives one the impression of a university. While many of its architectural requirements are of the conventional type, there is perceptible a groping for an expression not found in the ordinary building. The subject-matter of the college curriculum is so materialistic that those who appreciate best the innate beauty of agriculture feel the need of an animating environment that shall lift the technic of the materialistic out of the commonplace and raise it to poetic value.

These forty-eight colleges will demand henceforth not only an expressive architecture but an expressive new interior decorative art as well as an expressive exterior art. Neither can it long be overlooked that agriculture, both as art and science, is bringing forth great minds and personalities, such as men in all ages have delighted to honor and commemorate in an enduring way. Agricultural legislation already has its great men whom the

States will soon think to honor in bronze. Shall the sculptor of the war-horse and of his heroic rider be called upon to do these pieces? God forbid. Give us rather the skill born of a new experience and a rapt appreciation.

But you will ask whether there is any broad, democratic demand for rural art. The answer is on the tip of the tongue. The thousands of rural schools in the United States have waited long with desire for these symbols of beautiful meaning which shape youth more than lessons. Educators are at their wits' end to convey to farm boys and girls the magic of art. One little stroke from the artist's hand is worth, at this point, a hundred lectures from the educator. The new art tried out and found true at the college is ready then for the rural school.

One highway for rural art leading straight to the homes of farmers themselves is the agricultural press. At present the photograph is in the lime-light in all agricultural papers. And probably it is true that a good photograph is better in the agricultural press than a hackneyed piece of depressing hoe art, however justifiable the classic may have been in its own day and place. How welcome the new type of rural art would be to editor and reader, it takes little fancy to feel.

Farmers are building rural community houses, great consolidated schools, great country churches. In the coming decade the number will be multiplied. Who will put the touch of beauty with meaning into these structures? Who will invest them with the air of dignity, distinction, and worth? The more prosperous farmers

who stay upon the land are, somewhat blindly it may be, trying to express their joy and abiding faith in agriculture and country life, in a type of country house, of farmstead, and landscape. Who will assist in this vast enterprise to make the country more expressive. more meaningful, more human and add to the beauty of nature's majestic setting the beauty of man's ideal and thought?

The American village, which, for at least another generation as in the past, will be the center of many activities of farmers, is as raw and crude as it is, not because agriculture surrounds it, but because it bears the stigma of the hoe. The curse, such as it is, has been put upon it. Its blight is one of thinking—disdain, neglect, or condescension. It will take only a thought, a fine thought, a belief, a winsome belief, to change the American village. Whose rôle is it to believe the beautiful back into human nature? When art becomes an ally of agriculture, can it not, will it not, bring beauty and dignity into the small town and village? Then fountains will play on the green. Then civic centers will cluster around and beneath the elms. Then finer and finer ideas will find form in structure there. This means, however, coöperation of art with the best in agriculture and rural life.

But there are American artists who, comparing the close-fitting, tight-walled, tidy, and trim European village with our American village, say: "Give us the beautiful freedom of the American village. We love the negligée and abandon of its lines." Our comment is this: In asking thoughtful men and women of the day

to assist in adding to the American village and small town a touch of beauty, we are really asking that they shall gage the village according to a high value not now generally attached to it in the public mind. Those who praise the American village come out to it from the city, drive through it in a motor-car, remark how expansive the lawns are in contrast with the city, and drive away. They might thank God they did not have to live there or trade there. They think it is good enough, perchance, for those who do. But the people who live in the American village or utilize it for commercial purposes deserve in their civic center a quality of architectural harmony of the same fine distinction which the city seeks. Because we prize the American village and small town for what they mean to villager and farmer, we ask that artists add some legacy of perfection to its broad-flowing lines.

The Practical Side of the Rural Art Problem

The problem of rural art after all comes back to a very practical question. What can be done? What are the steps toward bringing art abreast with the new agriculture and rural life? Where lies the entrance into art circles for the new rural idea, which in very truth has already energized rural education, rural religion, rural commerce, rural recreation, rural journalism? Several answers are ready. Let us glance at them.

The schools of art are entrances into American art circles. Certainly it is possible for these schools to give chance for a voice to plead, even though it be at first an alien voice so far as art is concerned. This idea, once on the inside, fanned a little, only a little, will

begin to appeal to young artists of rural sympathies. If one has imbibed life from the hoe alone, he may, it must be confessed, be under the spell of rural pessimism. Too many exiles from farm life to city industry have brought away only misery and disillusionment of life. But there are those who have felt the glory. Hope is in these souls.

Could we not hope for a great Foundation for Rural Art? A wise and wealthy patron of rural art arising now has no competitor. Scope is his. Religion has its wealthy patrons, but rural religion has none as yet. Health has its wealthy patrons, and rural health has not been overlooked by them. What a force for national life the American Foundation for Rural Art would prove!

Could we not hope for a place for rural art in present-day exhibitions and competitions? This seems a legitimate hope. But such things do not just happen. Accident is outside this realm. Thinking on somebody's part, to the point of being on fire with the idea, is the begetter of such action. It is by no means unreasonable to look forward to a national conference and exhibition of rural art. This way trod rural education, rural religion, rural recreation. There were the enthusiasts, of course. There were the agitators. They were not always the eminent and stately. But their voice was at length heard. So may it be, so will it be, we may expect, in art. The tyranny of the traditional will be protested. And little by little the glory and beauty of a new rural art will come.

CHAPTER XV

THE COMING RURAL MUNICIPALITY

Democracy Remelted and Reminted

DEMOCRACY, like business, responds to the vitalizing process of periodic review, criticism, reinterpretation, and recreation. The new day is bound to have its new democracy as well as its new merchandising methods, even though the old be simply remelted and reminted. We are proposing at this point that democracy, as we have known it for a generation or so, be placed again in the melting-pot, and that the farm population be fused into the mass and that when poured out the mintage be coined into communities, each one possessing the qualities of a better democracy.

Four general divisions of people, groups which have come down from antiquity, claim our attention in any discussion of democracy: first, a grouping by nativity; second, one by wealth; third, one by intelligence; fourth, one by occupation. Birth, wealth, intelligence, and work divide people, each into several strata. Our concern just now is not that of democratizing the classes whose origin is in the varying degrees or conditions of birth, wealth, or intelligence. A democracy of those persons who differ widely in conditions of birth is the

special, well recognized task of the United States of America. A democracy of those possessing varying degrees of wealth—the multimillionaires, the wealthy, the well-to-do, the poor, the poverty-stricken—has been an age-old, never-ending problem. Fusing into democracy the different strata of the schooled, the uneducated, the intelligent, or the unintelligent is well recognized as an American objective. The public school in America has been one of the sure agents of democracy acting upon each one of these three groups. It is the fourth group and its democratization, however, which especially concerns us at this moment. Let us look at this division of people grouped by their occupation.

Broad Classes of Occupations

A broad division of occupations may be made into farming, industrial labor, personal service, merchandising. Our task is to consider how to democratize the people engaged in these different occupations. The theory of occupation is based on specialization of industry and the special ability of the worker. You cannot do all of the work for your own needs, and so you take a tiny part of the work for every one and apply the energies of your special ability to it. In order to be fair in your opinion about other work and about other persons in other occupations, you should, to a greater or less degree, know the ins and outs of the work of other people. For this purpose nothing can take the place of first-hand contact—laborer with farmer, farmer with merchandiser, merchandiser with laborer, and personal service agent with laborer, farmer, and tradesman. The

next best sort of contact is that of the children of families of one occupation with the children of families of other occupations.

In the eight grades of common school, either in city or open country, the make-up of the school is a matter of neighborhood. In village schools, on the other hand, the variety of occupations of the village will be a factor.

It is the high school, however, that lends itself best to democratizing the children of various occupational groups. It overcomes the isolation and segregation of residence groups. The high-school period comes at the dawn of the social and idealistic consciousness of the child and hence is well calculated to absorb the varying points of view of different occupational complexes and to lay the groundwork for sympathy with the broad, common aspects of all occupations.

No one would deliberately advocate the segregation of the children of skilled industrial workers in a high school, nor the children of merchandisers, nor the children of agents of personal service. What force could more quickly consolidate class consciousness, perpetuate class rancor, prepare for deeper conflict, than such a procedure?

Ideal Conditions for a Democracy of Occupations

Granting that workers in different occupations will be separated more or less from one another, physically and mentally, while working during a third of the day, it is plain that there should be some channel left open by which they may return, each from his special pursuit, each from contact with workers at the same task,

to a level of common life and appreciation of the results of all phases of work, to contact with workers in different phases of work. How to do it? How to have such a channel?

Residence together in neighborhoods is one means, so that the neighbor relation may furnish the common level.

Churches together, whether residence provides a channel or not, is a second answer.

Interoccupational clubs or societies furnish a third. Chambers of commerce, established to bring together merchandisers, are now frequently found functioning as interoccupational clubs.

Women's clubs furnish a fourth.

The municipality, containing within itself workers of a well rounded number of varieties of occupations, is perhaps on the whole the most far-reaching channel. Election of officers to direct and control broad common interests; institutions for common life; policies for development of the environing conditions of life; these severally bring all occupations together in thought and emotion, through conflict, no doubt, into unanimity of action.

Worst Possible Conditions for Democracy

The worst possible conditions for democracy unquestionably would be to perpetuate and intrench a situation of wide-spread segregation of classes of workers, in which occupational workers would be segregated into residence districts, so that neighbors would be practically of the same occupation; churches would be segregated, each containing a congregation of a single occupation; schools

would be segregated, each containing children from homes of workers of one class; all clubs and associations would be special and occupational, with no chance for interoccupational groups; municipalities would be composed of one occupation alone. Occupation is so absorbing an interest that when one occupation is isolated so completely as we have indicated there is created a virtually separate race of beings, with all the armored equipment of race and race rancor for defense and offense. The possible antagonisms are presumably multiplied many times. In so far, moreover, as any one of the foregoing isolations is a fact, in so far democracy is made more difficult. If, furthermore, it should happen that any one great occupational group is isolated in all of these respects and its social life developed under a condition of general segregation, the democracy of that group is losing much, while national life becomes more difficult on this account.

Farmers Have No Community Municipality

The situation outlined above as the worst possible is, broadly speaking, the farmer situation in America. Farmers are grouped together in farm neighborhoods by residence; their churches, schools, clubs, associations, are farmer groups, by and large; except in portions of New England where the prevailing municipality is the "town," the farmers of the United States have no effective local municipalities. In other words, the farmer is shut out of the democratic municipal village and city and left stranded in the open country by himself, without any community municipal apparatus. The ef-

fect upon democracy is evident. Especially is this effect important, seeing that the farm population is the largest group of a single occupation in our total population. The occasional inheritance of sullen resentment is due to this situation. Many of the economic agricultural troubles are doubtless due to this faulty expression of democracy giving rise to misunderstandings between city man and country man.

Justice to the farm population as a whole will prompt America some day to remedy this situation. Farm people will be enabled to associate in closer touch with other workers. The institutions of farmers, so far as possible, will be conducted jointly with other classes. The equal opportunity of the farmer to a just share in the national social dividend can be brought about only by restoring him to a real place in democracy. But this is a matter far easier to state than to accomplish.

The local government of the farm people of the United States will be almost the last subject for serious-minded reconstruction. The frontier will hang on to the farmer's political coat-tails long after it has been severed from his school, trade, and recreation. Of course the frontier will stick closer than a brother to every form of rural organization; but to the farmer's precious township and county the frontier will cling with a grip which only a life-and-death struggle will loosen. And yet in spite of this tenacity and struggle, the frontier must be cut clean away. For the farmer is entitled to live a modern life with other modern men, unhampered by remnants of a bygone and outlived age.

This slowness with which the farmer is becoming ad-

justed politically is undoubtedly holding him back economically. The log that gets caught between the rocks stops the next log and the next, and a log jam delays the whole log run. The farmer's local municipality has jammed the whole country life movement and is holding it up. It is the aim of this discussion to set forth the rural municipal problem in broad terms so that it will be seen as a factor in every other important rural social and economic problem. Let us glance at the part a municipality plays in the life of a group of people.

The Rôle of a Municipality

The genius of a municipality is its equipment of legal powers and natural environing circumstances for efficacious home rule. People have always craved home rule. In certain matters, especially, home rule is not only desired by the people directly concerned but is considered desirable by other people who are indirectly concerned. A municipality is established by law and set going, like a machine. It is a kind of semiautomatic social machine, which in the experience and wisdom of men seems best adapted for achieving certain public purposes. It is a single quite complicated machine, usually contrived to take care of a great number of very diverse projects. It is considered better to have one municipality, one machine, to take care of all the local public functions ranging from the matter of streets clear through to that of municipal golf grounds, than to have fifty separate and distinct municipalities, fifty machines, each with a single function, and all related more or less to the same group of people. Experience has demon-

strated the ability of a group of people ranging from one thousand persons up to five thousand, organized as a municipality, to function adequately in local government and home rule in regard to these diverse activities. No substitute has ever been seriously brought forward for this municipality. A group of people, having geographic unity, with similar interests, incorporated by legislative enactment, given privileges and powers of home rule according to the size and needs of the group, is the best that civilization can yet offer as a local political unit. There are grades of municipalities depending upon the size of the group and so upon the requirements of the group.

The best example of municipality, very likely, is the city. It is not necessary here to describe the city in detail. Its compact business and residence character lends itself very naturally to grouping, especially when taken in connection with the fact that city groups are usually separated from one another by considerable distances and so have a distinctness that marks each as a unit. It is not difficult to persuade this city group of its common interest in the diverse details of municipal government. So long as the city of one hundred thousand persons looks after the common institutional interests of all the homes up to the point, but not beyond it, where people can effectively coöperate, and so long as a city of one thousand people does not attempt the functions that it would require the resources of five thousand people to maintain, then home rule by cities of different grades and populations can nicely adjust itself to the purse and public needs of the citizens.

Adjustment to conditions of growth and expansion is always possible in cities under their charters. New charters are available when cities outgrow their grade. A city is never in doubt about the reach of its school system. It is coterminous with its incorporated area. Its high-school district covers the whole city. The city is responsible for the health and opportunity for play of all persons within its area. Its trading institutions are part and parcel of the city. There is no question about the responsibility of trade agencies for service to citizens. The unity, compactness, and distinct, unambiguous character of the city make it an exceptionally fine type of municipality. With the city in mind as a municipal machine with the outlines of effectiveness, whatever may be true of the imperfect character of the personnel in power, let us take a look at the rural municipalities of the present day.

Present Rural Municipalities

Barring the agricultural village of Utah and some similar agricultural villages in New England, it is vain to look for or expect in the future to find compact groups of farmsteads and farm homes comparable with the unity and compactness of cities. The American farm population is scattered; probably it will always remain scattered. Its lack of compactness and its disunity will always handicap it. The problem of modernizing the municipality of the farmer will be one that will have to cope directly and vigorously with this characteristic of American farming. Those who engineer

the job must decline to lie down before it in despair or resignation.

The farmer in frontier days acquiesced in having his public common interests taken care of by makeshifts. He could have no city; so the possibility of having a single municipality for all local needs seemed for the time being impracticable. He early learned to rely upon different municipalities. For schools he had a school district. This is a municipality with a single function, viz., maintaining a public school. For roads he had a road district, virtually a municipality with a single function, viz., maintaining highways. Latterly he has come to have a drainage district, a municipality for digging and maintaining a drainage ditch. The farmer also had the township, sometimes with no partner. This was a municipality having functions related to highways, schools, and police. Then as a last resort the farmer had some local functions performed by the county. As any type of farmer's municipality proved weak or ineffective, the tendency came about for the county to take over its functions. The county municipality was a partnership with several other municipalities—villages, townships, cities—which might be within its borders.

In New England the town was from early days a partnership of farmer and villager or city man. As a municipal machine it gave its benefits to farmer and city man alike. At first the town with its town hall or common meeting-place had something of the same unity and compact character possessed by the city. Usually there was a village core and a farming fringe.

As population grew, however, many New England towns came to have more than one trading place or core, each core having its fringe. For historical reasons the original core and town hall kept serving. The town organization was maintained through adjustment and adaptation even though its core came to be of large-city size. It appears, therefore, that the New England town lacks the unity of the city in much the same way as the county, even though it is much smaller than the county.

Maladjustments in Present Rural Local Government

While the city has forged ahead with modern institutions and kept fairly modernized step by step and stage by stage because it could deal with the wants of a compact group, the farmer has found it exceedingly difficult, by utilizing the crude municipalities which were created for a single purpose or a few purposes adapted to an outlived age, to modernize his institutions. For example, the school district was made for a frontier school. It was neither large enough nor wealthy enough to maintain a modern school. This district could not modernize its function. The township also was too small, with too few people in it, to modernize its highways. It must, if it was to do anything modern with its roads, simply fall in line with greater governing areas, such as county or State. The county meantime was in partnership with cities and towns and villages and could not give itself thoroughly to developing the local institutions that the farmers needed.

In the presence of so many divisions of function and

so many obstacles, it is no wonder the farmer was belated and delayed in modernizing his public local institutions. And yet, in spite of these difficulties, the record of his endeavor is interesting. The record is mainly one of modernization of his schools. Finding that his school district was too small, too poor, he looked about to see how he could remedy the trouble. He hit upon the scheme of "consolidation," simply adding district to district until there was an area large enough, wealthy enough, to support a modern school. The story of "consolidation of school districts" is a story romantic, adventurous, long, in building a new farmer's municipality. The state law had to be changed. This was very hard to effect, and met with the opposition of all traditionalists. Even when the law finally gave permission, then the process of gaining the free will of the particular people concerned was long drawn out. The farmer's task of putting himself legally into a position to take advantage of progress in education and to have a modern school has been as arduous apparently as it would have been to carve out a single municipality for himself which, like the city, might have functioned for all his common public needs.

When the farmers of Wisconsin wanted to have community houses, they had to get a law enacted that enabled them to create a community-house municipality. When North Carolina realized how inadequate was its form of local government for farmers, it passed a law making it possible for certain groups of farmers to establish a rural municipality. The American farmer has not been idle in regard to his maladjustments. He has

squirmed around some of his difficulties. He has made the county do things unheard of in the olden days. This shows that the farmer may be relied upon to put his hand to the plow and to turn his furrows until he has a real harvest of modern institutions.

A Proposed Alliance of City and Farm

In the county, and in the townships of some States, city and farm have long coöperated in government. Many of the activities of this government approach close to local municipal government in type. It is not a new proposal, therefore, that city and farm form a municipal alliance. The new idea is to make the alliance a substitute for the present collection of municipal functions possessed by the farmer. Let us briefly look at an ideal case for alliance, and this may indicate what could be done in circumstances less ideal.

If there were a consolidation of rural trade centers, so that in place of several thousand incomplete hamlets and villages the American farm people had five thousand complete trading cities ranging from thirty-five hundred to ten thousand in population, then the farmer would have a start toward an ideal municipality. Like the original New England town, each such municipality would have a city core. There would be five thousand rural-urban municipalities. The natural farm trade basin of each small city would be included with its trading city in a coöperating municipality. The municipal boundary lines would be as irregular as the boundaries of city municipalities now, all depending upon the lay of the land and the accessibility of farm-

ers to this city in comparison with an adjoining city. On the average, six thousand farm people would be attached to each municipality. Their farm lands would lie within it, as the farms of New England lie within the New England town.

The farmers trade with these particular city people, anyway. The farmer's banks are in the city, with his railway, his freight office. Virtually all his dealings of buying and selling are here. These tradesmen he is acquainted with. These people are his people. What more natural than that he should carry on with them political affairs as he does already with economic affairs? Let us look at a rough plan of such a coöperative municipality.

Plan of a Coöperative Municipality

The first step in the creation of a municipality to be composed of a small-city core and a farming fringe is to get the bounding lines. This has no theoretical difficulty, though it may be attended with the customary practical difficulties of fixing new boundaries to cities as expansion becomes necessary. The theory is to include all the farms of those farmers regularly trading at this city. To these farmers the city is already theirs in a commercial sense. Their post-office is here. An analysis will show that these particular farm homes and these particular trading agencies are more closely intertwined already than any one would suspect. Linking them together politically is a step that completes and enriches their economic and social relations. The new municipality, the new rural-urban city, will have an

area of perhaps 225 square miles, that is, a radius of seven and one half miles. A map of this new municipality would look very much like a small irregular county that has only one trade center, namely, the county-seat.

The next feature in the plan is perhaps the most novel and experimental. New England has proved in its town government that farmers and city people can keep political house together and do one another justice; so it appears that this element of coöperation is not the novel or probational element. The novel proposal is to zone the new municipality into three zones. The zones would need to be laid out with great care. Here is another boundary problem, with the usual attending clashes of interest, desire, greed, but an engineering problem perfectly capable of solution. The zones would not, of course, have the regularity of circles or circular lines; but roughly, for purposes of description, they may be thought of as bounded by circular lines. Zone No. 1 would be the bulk of the original city, especially all the well developed, paved, sewered, sidewalked portion that may be thought of as the whole circle lying at the heart of the area. This zone, for convenience, may be considered as having a radius of one mile, that is, a diameter of two miles. Zone No. 2 would be a belt lying between the outer boundary of Zone No. 1 and a circular line drawn from the same center as Zone No. 1 having for a radius, let us say, three miles. Zone No. 2 would then be a belt two miles wide just outside the city core. The third and remaining zone would be the rest of the municipal area, a belt four and a half miles wide lying

between the outer boundary of Zone No. 2 and the boundary of the whole municipality. The object of the zones and the nature of each zone and the relations to one another can be only roughly indicated.

First, the object of the zones. The people in the whole municipal area have undoubted great interests in common, which can reach perfect satisfaction only in common united institutions and activities. At the same time, there are some common interests of the people of the city core which the people in Zones 2 and 3 do not have. Likewise the people of Zone 2 very likely are so situated that they have some common interests not shared with Zone 3. This matter of zones is somewhat different from the well known divisions of cities into wards, although there are similarities. The new municipality would have, it is presumed, its wards, also. Let us resort to illustration to make clearer the object of creating three zones.

The street paving, water system, sewerage system, relate evidently to the city core, not to Zone 3 at all, and possibly not to Zone 2. The school system, however, would relate to all zones in its administration, and would be headed by a central high school. The property in the three zones would be subject to tax for only such purposes as the zones individually shared fully. The adjustment of taxation to the degree of coöperation and sharing would be a delicate but by no means impossible problem. Such problems in taxation are common in all grades of state and federal government.

Zone No. 2 would be the zone into which Zone No. 1 would be pushing. Occasional rezoning would be neces-

sary in a growing municipality, as a matter of course. But there is no novelty in readjustment to city growth. The merging of wards, the division of wards, the addition of new wards, are commonplaces. City engineering is coping with this problem continually.

As the plan got headway and the benefits began to accrue to city trade and to the farmer's institutional life, the difference between the zones would not appear so great as at first. For example, the city core, Zone No. 1, would see the strategy of a system of modern highways linking every farm family to the trade center. There would be less discussion than one is inclined at first to think about including the highways in the total budget wherein each zone is to share. Moreover, the basic matter of a complete highway system economically engineered having been established, then the up-keep of the fire department, which is looked upon as a compacted city facility, will appeal to Zones 2 and 3. A run of five miles for a fire crew is a common thing in large cities now. Such a run on good country roads would also become commonplace.

Such a type of municipality, once come to be the type of local unit in a State, would of course do away with townships (except for land description purposes) and probably with counties, also. The State would step in and function in matters where home rule was impracticable in these municipalities.

If the present city, large or small, objects that incorporating the farmer and his farm into some municipal alliance with itself will give no end of trouble, will slow down their progress, and will take the edge off their

methods of political procedure, then cities must propose an alternative solution that will give the farm population the municipal machinery for progress; or else the city must pay the constant penalty of its political segregation in the presence of a restless "farm bloc" ever in a turmoil for satisfaction and freedom from discrimination. Absorb the farm in the city; make the farmer a part of your municipal citizenship, as you do the contractor and his men, as you do the mill owner and his men: then the farmer will certainly not array himself against the city.

If the farmer objects to alining himself with the city politically, it may be pointed out that he must live close to this city anyway; that he helps make the bank and banker, the store and merchant; and he might as well get some of the political dividends of their farm-made energy, property, and leadership. Instead of fighting the city at arm's length, why not go in with it and share in its progress? This is modern life, and a modernized farmer is very little different from a modernized banker.

The American farmer's economic problem, which everybody now concedes to be serious, is complicated by his municipal handicap. It may seem a long way round to getting a better price for his crops, to go in partnership with the city politically; but it has to be said that in this way lies remedy. Politics can spoil the economics of a class, if it sets about it, and good politics can cure many an economic ill. (The assumption that the farmer's present local political hamstrung situation is unchangeable and must go on, because put into play during the frontier era, is common; but the philosophy of

it is medieval. The assumption can be challenged until it is no longer in good standing. And hither lies the way of the thinker. The proposed plan amounts only to a graphic challenge to think the problem out.

CHAPTER XVI

SOURCES OF RURAL HOPE

HOPE is "Vitamine No. 1" in service. Without hope in the heart of the man or woman who serves, ministration mysteriously fails to minister. Twelve thousand highly trained specialists in various phases of agriculture and country life are employed by colleges of agriculture and by the United States Department of Agriculture to advance the science of agriculture in America and to reinforce at every point the farming industry. Literally hundreds of thousands of teachers also are training rural school children. Thousands and thousands of country ministers are "breaking the bread of life" to farm people. Thousands of editors are making their mark on the minds of farmer folk. And many, many other servants of civilization are ministering to the comfort and well-being of these thirty millions of people.

Do these persons as they labor entertain hope for agriculture and rural life? Do they believe with the heart as they work with the head that farming is good, and that life on the farm is essentially satisfying for man, woman, and child? Do they cherish the idea that their labors will help bring better conditions where conditions are now bad? If hope is theirs, is it intelligently based, based on a well considered set of facts?

Can their hope endure reverses; can it withstand the shock of sad, degenerate human sights, plans gone wrong, ingratitude for love's labor? Rural hope, the vitality-breeding kind, or rural optimism, if you wish to call it so, has its sources. It comes, when it comes, because of something real and tangible. When hope departs from the heart for a time, especially when due to a low ebb in the life of the ministering agent, there are devices by which hope may be coaxed back. It is a real problem of country life, how the trained leaders and skilled ministrants of rural science and culture are to maintain a hopeful, cheerful poise in the transition from frontierism to modern life. If despair over the low estate of the farm communities in America, measured by brutalizing averages of crude statistics, filters into the mind of rural teacher, preacher, county agent, agricultural professor, government scientist, and becomes there an obsession, it would be better for rural advancement if the worker were to give up his task and go to the city culture and occupation. Only hope held in a heart of grace can help bring on the coming of the new day.

Sources of Hope in One's Family History

If a person has come of a farmer strain, he has experience of an intimate character that should go into the making of so delicate a human sentiment as belief in the future of farm people. The writer feels at a loss at this point to convey what lies in his heart and mind; and, much as he would prefer some other way, he feels driven to the necessity of relating his own personal experience. He hopes, therefore, pardon will be granted him by the

reader for employing in this chapter the first person and for so freely opening the door of his life upon many very personal experiences and private judgments.

I have known all my life that, look into whatever branch of family history I might, my forebears for eight generations in America were farmers or farm bred. My earliest personal remembrances attach themselves to the farms of my four grandparents and of my several uncles in Delaware, New York, Michigan, and Virginia. All the bedtime stories told me in childhood had their settings in farm communities of Ohio and Virginia. Though the son of a country minister, and therefore much accustomed in early boyhood to the precincts of churches (including the horse-sheds), I was a constant visitor for long stretches at a time to the farms of my relatives. You can see how I took for granted that the farmer was as good as anybody. The best people I knew were farmers. The best places I frequented were farms. It never entered my head that I had to apologize for my grandfather's business. This sentiment of the honorable character of farming and its high place in the nation has, I must confess, never in my life missed a beat of my heart. Though charged with exacting church duties, my father thought he could not properly raise his family of four boys without a farm for them to live on and work with. He therefore bought and operated a farm of ninety acres where we boys breathed, roamed, sweat, and played during early adolescence.

In my grandfather Look I saw the hoe farmer. I saw his psychology. But I saw the hoe farmer in him quietly change as his children, grown to manhood and

womanhood, came to know the world a bit and brought it home to the farm cottage under the chestnut-trees. He was deacon in the country church. As I remember him now, dressed in his trim black suit brushed off to the last fleck of horsehair, boots polished like a mirror on Saturday night, mind you, tall silk hat carefully smoothed with a silk handkerchief, I know that dirt and farming are not inseparable. Cleanliness was next to godliness in very truth with my grandfather, and he was an ordinary farmer from Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

I saw a great deal of my two grandmothers, for they lived to be ninety-two and ninety-five years old respectively and during the last ten years of life lived in my father's household. I had seen them in their own farm kitchens, among their farm neighbors, in the affairs of the church. Then I saw them gravely age. I saw their bodies weaken but their spirit stay strong. I heard them rehearse their experiences; I came to know their abiding ideals and saw their contentment with their lot. Can any one suppose that I would be "making believe," as children do and as politicians sometimes do, about the essential honor and glory of farming and farm life, when I have grown up in the sacred presence of those who have lived the life and loved it through and through? Do I not know that it is possible to live worthily and gloriously on American farms in these days when I have seen how it was done a few decades ago?

In my father's parishes I came to know a great many farm boys and girls. The little one-room school gave me my early schooling. The country parson's boy had

to take pot-luck in education with the boys of the parish. The two-mile walk to school with dinner-pail swinging is a never-to-be-forgotten piece of living. Irish Catholic boys and girls and Protestant boys and girls fought over the old feuds of the centuries there in the little school. All the best of little pioneer schools, and all the worst, I am bound to believe, were in this school. Do I not know how those schoolmates of mine grew up, some to farm it there in the parish, some to go to the big city twelve miles off the hills down in the valley? Have I not followed their achievements? Knowing by heart the childhood of farmers, knowing the strong stuff, physical and mental, in the folk group at school, knowing the frailty of the little school, if I have hope now, is it not a tried and tested hope?

Did I not many a time visit the farms of my father's parishioners? Deacon Fish, an excellent farmer, driving fat, sleek, clean-looking horses. A farm productive but a farm beautiful; for Deacon Fish, though an exacting character where a matter of truth and right was concerned, was humane, gentle in soul, imaginative, a man to whom harmony in all things had the force of a commandment. And Deacon Wright, a hustling driving man at work, but deeply read, intelligently informing himself on matters of politics, history, culture. Generous to his minister. Did I not see these two deacons carry the little country church on their backs during their prime? Did I not see them weaken at the plow, as years grew upon them; and finally did I not see them leave the farms and farming to their sons; retire to the great city and take up again in city churches the

spiritual burdens? I know why they left the bleak church up in the hills. But do I not know that a new day can come to the hills, when sturdy churchmen need not go to the big city to top off their careers?

Many a rural leader has similar family sources of hope for country life. Discernment in one's personal experience with farm people will reinforce one's long-time optimism. What a loss to any man or woman who, trying to bring in the new farm day, never has had his early life intertwined with that of rural people! The only compensation possible is to embrace every opportunity to come to intimate enough terms with farm people, so that they behave in his presence with the naïveté that characterizes their demeanor with children. Only much personal acquaintance with individuals can give the sureness of a well based hope.

Sources of Hope Found in Community Life

It fell to my fortunate lot, after graduating from college, to be asked to visit an academy situated in the country six miles from a railway, as a possible teacher of the physical sciences. I remember well my first evening. The country stage had brought me to the little inn near the academy. After supper I went to my room, expecting to go to bed early and so appear at my best next morning when I was to meet the school board. Soon a knock came to the door, and a young man entered, or rather bounded in, saying:

"You 're going to be the new teacher, are n't you?"

Replying, I said, "I hope I 'll suit the school-board well enough."

Thereupon the young fellow almost shouted in a mysterious enthusiasm that I was not prepared to share: "Well, we want you to pitch on our nine. We 're going to have a baseball tournament here, and we 've heard that you pitch a curve that comes on like a corkscrew."

I denied the "corkscrew" but admitted that I was the college pitcher. Then the youth sidled up and half whispered:

"When you meet the school-board, don't, for heaven's sake, tell them you play ball. My dad is president of the board. He is a farmer, you know, and has no use for baseball. I 'm an Amherst man myself, graduated last year, and we are trying to put up a stiff game here at the tournament. Say, I forgot; there is one man on the school-board, Doc Frame, who likes to see a good game of ball. Better tell him on the side that you play on the college team. It might prove a winner with him."

So I became a teacher in a real farmers' academy, and incidentally a member for years of the community baseball team.

Here I found a school of high-school grade already in its sixtieth year, serving nearly one thousand farm homes and the few hamlets scattered in among the farms. It was to all effects and purposes a folk school with a spirit almost identical with the famous folk schools of Denmark. It was a people's school, a school of, for, and by the common people, who in the great majority of cases were ordinary dirt farmers, whether owners or tenants. The school-board was made up of thirty members, all resident farmers with the exception

of one or two country storekeepers, two country doctors, and a country undertaker. An endowment provided funds which, together with tuition from the students who were able to pay, maintained the school. It was my good fortune to live in this community and teach the farm boys and girls for thirteen years. For ten of the years I was the principal. Let me convey to you the genius of this school of this community of a thousand farms.

First, its founding. In 1808 the country got its first settler. It was a forest tract. Log houses were the first houses and served, some of them at least, almost to my day. When these pioneers were still clearing, still putting up their log houses, a country minister, Joshua Bradley by name, came among them. He soon began to preach education with all the vigor of "hell-fire." He went from home to home over several townships and said:

"You must have a school higher than the common school. You must. You must. Your children will call you blessed one day if you give them such a school. Moreover, such a school will help save your community."

These plain farm men and women from Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut listened to Joshua Bradley. One gave land, many gave work, and all gave money; and a stone building arose dedicated to truth and higher learning. In this building for sixty years had always stood some college-trained man with a corps of college men and women bringing the torch of knowledge from the world of letters and life. They stood in the community among these thousand farms as ambas-

sadors of light and culture. Here I took my place in my turn, following in the steps of men I came to love and revere simply from what I saw of their influence upon the people.

I found that no boy or girl could be so poor as not to have the advantages of the Academy, if the boy had promise and a will to learn, if the girl showed interest and ability. Let me show you how this would work out. It would be the monthly board meeting night. They met in Memorial Hall, a room hung round in my day with the large portraits in oil of old farmer worthies, presidents of the board in other days, old principals. I would make my report on the conditions, needs, outlook.

I would say, "There is a bright boy over in Lorraine who would come to school next quarter if he had some help on his tuition."

William Mather, farmer, living two miles and a half out, would speak up quietly: "Put me down for this boy's tuition. I knew his father when he was a young man. If the boy 's like his father, he is all right."

J. J. Mather, farmer, three miles out, would remark: "There is a nice girl in the Mixer District who ought to be in school here. Her father is a tenant with a large family of young children. I 'll give ten dollars toward her tuition."

John Carpenter, undertaker, would speak up: "Five dollars for the girl. If J. J. says she 's all right, then she is."

Name after name would come up, be briefly discussed, and then taken care of personally by these great-hearted farmers. Do you think that I could be in that com-

pany of ordinary dirt farmers for ten years, and see this thing unfailingly happen, and not come out with an ingrained belief that American farmers have it in them to uphold the best ideals of education? How many disappointments suffered by me in other communities will it take to eradicate the hope in what I have seen with my own eyes?

Meet a few of these dirt farmers. Let me present Norris Shepardson. You will not understand this man at all if you think farmers are money-grubbers, materialists, and "out for the profit" only; for Norris Shepardson was always giving something away. Yes, little things, as you suspect, the Santa Claus variety of needed little things or very symbolic little things. He conveyed his love in the unobtrusive gift left without a name. The nameless basket of grapes, the bag of apples, the strange bouquet, the bag of flour left without a trace—these came to be known as coming from Norris Shepardson. But he could give other things. There was his large timber lot. He gave it into the care of the Academy for the community, on condition that "no live tree be cut down in it for a hundred years." When his will was read it was found that most of his farm went into the endowment fund of the Academy.

Let me present Deacon Heald, a farmer living three miles out. Many a time I have heard the deacon say, "I am running my farm for Christ." Walking down the street with you, the deacon, stepping along with a decided hitch, because one leg was so bent up at the knee that it was considerably shortened, might burst out of a reverie with this: "Well, there is really only

one great problem in the world: is there a God? If there is, then everything else will be solved. And, you know, I believe there is a God."

This belief probably accounted for an action strange even to those farmers who knew him well. When pledges were being taken for the endowment fund at one commencement season, Deacon Heald arose and said:

"My farm is worth six thousand dollars. I will give one thousand dollars of this farm to the endowment."

He put a mortgage on the farm and gave the thousand dollars to the fund. This belief of Farmer Heald's in higher education will go a long way to sustain a belief in the American farmer's ultimate adoption of the educational ideal.

Now to present William Mather, a descendant of the New England Mather family. His likeness to General U. S. Grant in looks was remarked by every one. He was a hard working, sturdy farmer of a level-headed, thrifty type, a lover of a great lecture on a sweeping historical theme, a good listener to a really great preacher, a very poor listener to a poor preacher. Then he could n't keep awake until he got to sleep. He was a man intelligent enough to know what he had missed in life by being so tremendous a worker himself in the fields and with his herds. As his strength was finally failing he called me over to the farm one day and said: "I am weary. I have worked too hard. My days are numbered. When I am gone I want you to tell my boy my great wish for him."

And I sat rather numb, wondering what this last wish could be.

"Tell him," he went on, "I want him to be more of a public man than I have been. I want him to read more than I have. I want him to work less, know more, and serve his county and State as I have not had the ability to do."

Can any one think that I shall ever forget that a hard-working dirt farmer uttered a sentiment of such nobility? How long will it take to efface from my mind the belief that farmers have it in them to be public-spirited citizens?

"But," you ask, "did the son do as his father wished?"

The answer is, he did. The story is too long, too intimate, to tell here. Suffice it to say that the son's influence in the last twenty years has penetrated the councils of farmers of his State, weighed with the governor and legislators, and won a place of honor for him in the state college of agriculture.

Here is Frederick Williams, farmer president of the Academy board of trustees, direct descendant of Roger Williams of Rhode Island fame, a stern man of highly independent ways, a reader, thinker, traveler, a public leader. No one in his community thought of committing the community to a line of action without first finding out "what Fred Williams thinks about it." Farmer Williams was the benevolent dictator of public opinion by right of the power of thinking; while Norris Shepardson was the dictator of the community con-

science by right of his unerring response to the claims of mercy, love, and beauty.

And here is Dr. Chapman, country physician, mediator between the weakness of human nature and the stern demands of educational standards. I was a youth; the doctor was in his prime. He would take me to the marshes duck-hunting. I would pour into his ears, seeing that he was a member of the school-board, the shortcomings of this boy and that in school. Pranks, mischief, cards, tobacco, idleness a spree! These worried me. I would cut the boy out of the school herd, corral him at home, and set him to work. The doctor would calm my fears and worries:

"I have seen many such boys in the Academy in my time," he would remark, "and they have invariably turned out to be good men. Be patient. Try them a little longer."

The doctor knew these farm families as well as he knew the clever little mare he drove the country-side over. He knew the worst that could be said of them, but he knew the best; and he handed on to me the philosophy of the best. It was a rare good fortune for me to have known a real country doctor for thirteen years.

And there was George Bull, farmer, financier, musician, hunter, trusted citizen. Can a man farm the land, soil his clothes, be weary with labor, and maintain a refinement of mind like that of the artist? George Bull did. Shall I ever forget the long room in his farm-house dedicated to music, where on occasions neighbors and friends would gather and listen to the musical re-

cital given by the Bull family, each member taught to play some instrument of music?

Do you say, "This is a freak"?

No, not a freak, for you must remember that for sixty years the Academy had provided a music department. Music was a commonplace among the thousand farm homes. Again you will note the likeness to the folk schools of Scandinavia. How can I entertain, after this deep experience in community life, the idea that culture cannot step over the farm threshold?

Eunice Bull Mather, farm housewife, is still living at a ripe old age; mind keen, eye undimmed, a heart open to the cry of need anywhere in the world; but thrifty, saving, as a matter of religion, also. Her father in his time was a member of the Academy school-board. Often have I heard Eunice Mather tell of the stormy, snow-bound winter days when she was a child. The monthly board meeting would come round in February, snow or no snow, and the family lived three miles from the Academy. Eunice's mother would say to her husband:

"My dear, don't go out to-night. The storm is dreadful. I am afraid you will take your death. Please give up the meeting to-night."

Eunice remembered well her father's invariable reply:

"We must keep the Academy going for our children. You know it has meant everything to us. I cannot stay home just because it storms."

And after the hard day in the woods, out into the blast he would go, returning wearily far into the night.

This, I say, is the kind of tradition handed down from father to son, which, when one has once seen it, burns its way into one's soul. When the passing of her husband William came, an event which meant a great deal to me as a friend and teacher of his son, I pondered much over the kind of memorial that should be raised to his memory, for I knew that in this community it was not generally considered decent to let a farmer pass out and into the other world without a gift to the Academy in his memory. It was not many weeks afterward, when I said to Eunice:

"Your husband was one of the best farmers in this county. His name should be written in some way into the cause of good farming."

Eunice replied, "Yes, that is so; I will think it over."

A month passed. I was asked to come out to the Mather farm. Eunice had been "thinking it over." This is what she said:

"Why couldn't we have in the Academy a regular department of agriculture just as we have a music department, an art department, and a business department? Here we are teaching our farm boys banking, when they must go back to the farm and need to know the practices of better farming."

I clapped my hands with joy. "You are right. I see it as clear as day," I exclaimed.

Then the statesmanship of Eunice appeared: "I will pay your expenses to the state college of agriculture. Go down there and ask the dean if it is a practical idea. If the college will indorse the proposition, I will give five thousand dollars and my sister-in-law will give five

thousand to help endow a department of agriculture in the Academy in memory of the two brothers, William and George."

The story is soon told. I went and saw the college people; and, strange as it may seem now when thousands of high schools throughout America have such an agricultural course, the professors said:

"We do not know of any such course in secondary schools, but we believe the idea can be carried out, and we will contrive a course and give you a man to teach it."

So the Mather School of Agriculture was started in the Academy in 1901. There it stands to-day, one of those pioneer ideas, by reason of the hope and affection of two great farm women. How can I help but believe in the American farm woman, in her capacity, in her culture and leadership?

Sources of Hope in Fine American Rural Institutions

If you have ever seen an instance of a fine rural enterprise, institution, activity, or association, has it not thrilled you, and reëstablished waning hope of such things otherwhere? The John Swaney school in Illinois filled my heart with hope for rural education, as I stood in the grove that surrounds the school and heard the story of Uncle John Swaney's idea and gift. Just a farmer. But he had the idea. So the memory of great consolidations in other States has many times lifted my depression. I see now those buildings and teachers and children in Polk County, Wisconsin; in

Minnesota, far out on the prairie; in the San Luis valley, Colorado; in the Cache valley, Utah. I hear again the farmers talking to me about how these great schools came to be. I feel anew that it is not the old New England farmer alone who can entertain and hold dear the educational idea. I see in the San Luis valley the Mexican farmer, who, living though he does in a small adobe farm-house, still prizes the "great school" for his children. I see the hard-pushed potato farmer, living in the one-story house, proudly pointing to the great Sargent school. I see the Mormon bishop in the North Cache valley, driving his team and beet cultivator from one small holding over to another in the typical Utah agricultural village community. I remember his eulogy of the schools for his children. These vivid pictures stay by me during the dark days when I travel through country, rich in land maybe, but where the new day has not yet cast up one rosy finger.

How can I ever forget the negro farms and farmsteads in Gloucester County, Virginia? There they glisten white, trim, neat. I remember saying to my guide from Hampton Institute, "I can't some way believe that these are farms of colored people." But there the colored people were, and there were their well dressed children. I visited their schools. Fine schools. I could not keep back the question of unbelief:

"How come these things?"

Then I hear the old story, "Leaders with ideals belonging to their own race and class, showing the way to better things."

Then I learn that these colored people own their farms and homes. Then I hear of that colored man Walker and his hope. I see his farm-house, a Mecca. Then I believe all over again in my heart that the new day can come anywhere.

Denmark as a Source of Hope

You can read about the farmers of Denmark, and your soul will surely bound up; but when you *see* Denmark, see her farms and farm-houses, her schools and schoolmasters, her genius for collective effort, you come into the sacred possession, if you have any humanity at all, of a secret of race culture, a species of religion before which you bow in reverence. And this possession of yours you take back to America, and it sticks by you through the thick of the struggle with disappointment, dismay, and despair over the slowness of American rural progress.

It was in Roskilde, Sjelland, Denmark; I was seated in the office of the head master of the folk school. I had come to interview the head master. I spoke no Danish. He spoke English, but did not have command of enough English words to carry the full meaning of his deep philosophic ideas.

He said: "I am not sure to say what I want to say. Let me get the Danish-English dictionary. We place it between us, thus. Now let us talk."

So, with the dictionary as interpreter, he told the story of the Danish folk-school movement, told me its

genius and meaning to Danes, told me the romance of the founding of the Roskilde school.

"We are a small nation," the schoolmaster said, "and every Dane counts. When the farm boy comes to our folk school, by the living word we interpret to him the soul of Denmark."

The schoolmaster's eye grew bright; his manner became intense, eager, convincing; his words sped rapidly until he struck a lingual snag; when he snatched the dictionary, thumbed the pages, and then took up his story again.

"We tell these boys the lives of Danes of old. We say: 'You now are Denmark. The soul is intrusted to you. You must carry in you the life of the nation'; and the living word is caught and embodied in these farm boys."

These Danish schoolmasters are like the prophets of Israel. They are great souls themselves. Learned, simple in habits, emotional, their psychology is tremendously real. They enact the drama of a nation day by day before the youth. And the youth are initiated into national life as workers of land and growers of crops and animals. I came out of the folk schools melted over and remade. If Denmark's schoolmen could mold the youth of Denmark to great living on the farms of Denmark, schoolmen in America could mold America's farm boys into great American farmers. Little Denmark, you shelter great men. But you are simply rising to the heights of humanity. Humanity is essentially great. This is the basic fact back of hope in all optimists.

Sources of Hope in George Washington's Farm-house

Washington's Mount Vernon farm-house stands to-day very much as Washington planned and used it. Washington was convinced that his farm-house site could not be excelled for pleasant situation in the United States of his day. He says in a letter to Arthur Young: "I may without knowing it be biased in favor of the river on which I live. No other estate in the United States is more pleasantly situated than this."

The Mount Vernon farm-house, as everybody knows, has a wide front looking out across the Potomac River; a somewhat restricted rear, looking through a vista of two rows of noble trees to fields dropping gently down to a wood-clad ravine; two wings stretching in rounded curves on either end of the house into areas of outbuildings, gardens, and barns, quietly suppressed by various types of inclosure.

I have visited Mount Vernon several times for the express purpose of catching the spirit of the place as a farm-house site. I have never failed to hear in these visits naïve exclamations of delight from the crowd of visitors when looking at front, rear, or wings. There is no question that the house is a farm-house. As you reflect, you see at the far opening of the rear vista meadow-land retreating to the woods. If you look over the front lawn to the left a few hundred feet, you notice the corn-field and shocks of corn standing sentry. When you start your survey of the inclosures at the wings of the house, you see the red roofs of the unmistakable farm barns and the outlines of a kitchen garden.

The farm is around you but in modest retirement. The house and its setting are de-occupationalized and thoroughly humanized; the recognition of this fact is seen in the visitor's emotional delight.

An analysis of the psychology of the humanizing elements in the Mount Vernon farm-house site confirms us in the principle of detachment from the business and workaday spirit of farming. The detachment is accomplished most dramatically in the treatment of farm buildings, shops, barn-yards, and machinery by psychological barriers and inclosures at the sides of the house. A volume of detail might doubtless be written at this point, to illuminate Washington's method of secluding the necessary farm work, in close proximity, however, to the house. All we can do here is to indicate broadly Washington's method of treatment in detaching the house from the workaday elements of the farm. The principal device is a low brick wall or closely cropped hedge, stretching from either wing on the right and left, inclosing the garden and one set of buildings in an angle on the left and the barns and outbuildings in an angle on the right. The bareness of the brick walls is relieved along its length by ivy. Topping the walls at intervals are small-sized trees, which impose foliage color upon the wooden surfaces of buildings in the inclosure. At strategic distances are tall, broadly spreading trees, strong companion pieces to wall, ivy, and shrub in the task of screening off the farm work and secluding the house.

The tall trees outside the walls in the rear of the house give form and frame to the vista in the rear; lawn, sky

above, tall tree foliage, sky at end, meadow-land dropping out of sight. In the front of the house the lawn drops gradually below the level of the house toward the river a hundred feet below, and the expanse of the river is glimpsed only through a setting of large oaks on the river-bank. Washington writes to his farm manager, saying, "I do not hesitate to confess that reclaiming and laying the grounds down handsomely in grass, and having the woods thinned or in clumps, about the mansion house, is among my first objects and wishes."

The most significant and cheering element in the method of detaching the Mount Vernon farm-house from the occupational part of farming is that the exclusion and screening are done so largely by suggestion rather than by actual shutting out of every scintilla of farm work. The low wall and hedge are a psychological line of division and exclusion. We can peer over, but we do not. The roofs of the barns are visible, but lost to sense in the competing humanism of trees and framed sky.

The successful detachment of the Mount Vernon house from clinging, tagging work habits leaves the house environment free from humanizing effects. The dignity and majesty of tall trees, noble river, lofty sky, overlooking view, were used to the best advantage by Washington.

Turning now away from Mount Vernon to the humbler farm homes of America, and wondering whether these farm-houses and homes can be detached from farm work thoroughly enough to humanize their immediate physical settings, we pause. From Washington to our day is a

great step. John Jones down on his farm in Virginia has no slaves to do his work now. Washington was a wealthy farmer of the country gentleman type, too. John Jones, moreover, is a hard-working dirt farmer. But George Washington's ideals of independence and national life have filtered down to the humble schoolboy in the little country school. I cannot get away from the memory of Mount Vernon, as a farm-house, a farm home, which may carry its humanizing lesson to every American farmer. While I pause and wonder, I find myself saying, "Yes, the Washington farm-house can be a pattern for every farm home, even as Washington himself is a pattern for every American."

CHAPTER XVII

THE SKIMS: A SUBMARGINAL LAND[1]

1

My Lady and the Ration

"WHAT you need," said the doctor, "is exercise. Your muscles ought to work all the time as your mind does. Keep going, keep going, keep going."

So I went back to teaching, but followed the physician's injunction to keep going, walking miles and miles every day, practising with the dumb-bells hours on hours until the muscles would scarcely move. But no sleep. A wakefulness by night became a habit like the wakefulness by day.

The doctor was somewhat discomfited when the exercise cure failed. After temporizing a few weeks with powders and pills he reluctantly consented to a sanitarium, and there followed six months of baths; Turkish baths, electric baths, salt baths; machine massage, hand

[1] "The Skims" is a series of thumb-nail sketches depicting some human elements in country life, in black and white, out of the experience of the writer while a resident in a submarginal rural community. The sketches are intended to convey sentiments of a problematic character that resist a formal treatment.

massage, and more walking. Always I kept going, but still no sleep.

After the failure of sanitarium treatment, the doctor, almost at his wits' end, braced up and exclaimed: "Novelty, novelty is the thing. Go visit your friends. Keep going, but go from State to State and visit your friends. That 's it. Visit your friends."

So I rode to the east on a bicycle, visiting all my friends. Then I went far to the west, and kept going from friend to friend. Still no sleep.

As a last resort the doctor remarked: "You had better get next to the land. Keep going, but get your feet used to going on plowed ground. Keep close to the land."

Then it was that I looked around for the land I wanted to live with. I decided to choose the most novel land I could find. No ordinary farm would suit. I wanted a land unlike any other on the face of the earth, a primitive land that I could clean up, log, burn, and plow for the first time. When, therefore, in my wanderings I came to the Skims I was satisfied. All unknowing, I had drifted, just as the rest of the people of the Skims had done, unconsciously to my own. I had come into the land of machines with broken handles, of people with misfortunes, into the country of the lame, the halt, the blind, and those who could not sleep.

The Skims forms an island of about five hundred square miles, all sand and jack-pines; or, perhaps better, an archipelago of big and little sand islands, surrounded by a rough clay sea of oaks and maples, channeled through and around by currents of good tilled land.

A generation ago an army of titanic pines was encamped there. The lumber vikings dispersed this army, skimming off the pines like cream from a milk-pan, and left behind hacked stumps, rotting limbs, mutilated tree bodies, with some bare, scarred, lofty trunks standing like sentinels over their dead. Now all this is more or less shadowed and lost in the midst of jack-pines and scrub-oaks.

The land was to be had for a song, and sand plows up easily, and though the winds may blow the crops away, submarginal people who are pushed by competition off the marginal clearings stick like sand-burs to the Skims.

In the center of the Skims was a little wood-colored trading town, with wooden stores built with sham wooden fronts; wooden, wood-colored, one-story houses set on wooden blocks without cellars, their back yards backed up to the Skims, each with its little sand garden where the wind played, making sand-piles around the potatoes; and the jack-pines played another lonesome game with one another, running from close to the wood-colored houses off to illimitable areas. But it was not all dreariness, for rippling through the town was a miracle in sand, a spring brook, almost a river, clear as crystal and filled with speckled trout. The wonder was that the brook never dried up and never sank out of sight.

I walked for weeks, tramping about from early February until spring, searching for a stretch of land with a little bit of clay and a maple-tree. You were n't of the quality on the Skims unless you had a little outcrop

of clay on your land. You could n't take part in the general-store discussion unless you could boast of a stump turned over with clay hanging to its roots. And the man that had a maple, especially a hard maple, on his forty, well, nothing was too good for him. And I planned to be among the Skims' best citizens.

Day after day I stumbled through jack-pine sand and ash swamp, along the running brook, until finally one day in April I wandered upon two forties cut by the spring brook, three miles from the house, that met my every requirement. They could be had for thirty cents an acre with a tax title; the deal was soon closed, and I felt that the land was mine and the sleep that I was seeking was almost within my grasp.

The next desirable part of my equipment was a cow. I did n't intend to leave any stone unturned toward making a success on the Skims. Everybody else had a cow, or a sort of a cow, and so I must have one, too. I did n't know much about buying cows, but I played safe and went to the butcher; I thought maybe he could tell me where to find one. Curiously enough, he had one he wanted to sell. She looked big and black, and so I bought her and took her home with me, determined to give her the best the land could afford. We began by naming her My Lady.

We had n't had My Lady very long when we found that she possessed all the qualities of a natural leader. She always led the tinkling village cows home at night from the Skims pastures. We needed no bell for her. She always confidently headed the procession. And she had other qualities of a strong country personal-

ity. She was firm in her ideas and fixed in her ways.

I discovered this when I attempted to feed My Lady the best balanced ration known to government bulletins. I had determined that though My Lady was of the Skims, she should fare with the best, so I had sent for packages of Washington bulletins, which I studied religiously until I became the only living authority on feeds and feeding on the Skims. Then I proceeded to send to the mail-order house for the very best grain mixture prescribed. It came in due time, and was all that one might wish. It was a rich golden brown, and you could tell it yards away without seeing it.

I was delighted with it. "How glad," thought I, "My Lady will be to get some of this nice rich food after starving all her life on Skims grass and corn nubbins!" With joy in my heart I measured out the first ration for My Lady. It was then I discovered her to be a haughty aristocrat. She bent her head, looked at that splendid mail-order, bulletin-recommended stuff, looked at it keenly, sniffed, and tossed her head proudly in the air. She would n't touch it!

I can't tell you how astonished and grieved I was. I could n't believe it of her; so I left it there. Maybe she 'd think better of it and eat it after a while. But, no, indeed, she 'd have nothing to do with it. So I was obliged to throw it to the hens. They ate it. They 'd eat anything.

But I could n't give up. I wanted My Lady to try this delicious food I 'd taken all the trouble to get for her, so I went over to Neighbor Dugle and asked for advice. Dugle was a retired Skims farmer.

"Did you wet the meal up?" he asked me.

"No," said I, "I never thought of that."

"Wet it all up nice with warm water, and make a mash of it, and she 'll like it," said he.

So I went home and made a warm mash for My Lady. But do you think she would touch it? Not she! She took one sniff, then tossed her head higher than ever; and I had to feed it out to the hens again.

However, I was n't to be discouraged, so I asked the advice of Neighbor Porter, another retired farmer. Porter scratched his head thoughtfully for a minute and then said, "This cow is a Skims cow. She ain't used to any rich foods. Mix it in with bran for a while so she 'll get acquainted with the new food kind of gradual."

"I declare," said I, "I never thought of that. I 'll try it." So I did. But it was of no use. My Lady was still disdainful, and the good mail-order food went to the chickens as usual.

By this time I was getting pretty determined, and so I asked counsel from everybody I met.

"What your cow wants is corn on the cob," said a woman. "She 's never had any other sort of grain; she 's been raised on it. Put a few pieces around in your new feed for a bait."

"That 's a good scheme," said I. "I never thought of that."

But good as the plan was, it did n't work on My Lady of the Skims. She picked every one of those miserable corn nubbins daintily out of the golden meal and ate them cob and all, but would n't touch my balanced ration.

So it went on. Another Skims dweller suggested

ground oats and corn; another, salt; and I tried them both with no success. But I kept at it. It had become a morning and evening ritual with me. Every day for weeks I placed the mathematical meal before My Lady, and every day it was thrown out to the grateful hens.

And one day when it had got to be so much a habit with me that it was almost subconscious, My Lady of the Skims ate her ration!

Yes, sir, licked it all up clean, the way they do, you know, so that there was n't a speck left even in the corners. Well, I just stood there and stared at her. I was more astonished than when she had n't eaten it the first day.

I went around on the other side of the stanchion and scanned the big black freak from head to tail, both over and under.

Then I ran into the house and called my wife. "My dear, you ought to come out here. My Lady has eaten the bulletin ration! Come see for yourself; she has kicked herself all full of dents, because she had n't eaten this good stuff before!"

I have regarded My Lady, since this episode of waiting, as an excellent illustration of the changing psychology of the new farmer.

2

The Cid

If I must smoke my brain out with burning stumps and logs and get my feet accustomed to plowed ground, a horse, of course, must be added to my stock of ap-

pliances. That was how I came into possession of the Cid. The Cid was an institution.

I had gone down to the city horse-fair in the hope of finding a suitable companion for my labors, but the prices were too high for my pocket book; so I traveled back home, thinking that perhaps, after all, it would be better to get a horse that had been raised on the Skims and grown wise to its ways. Accordingly, not knowing where else to go, I went to the chief middleman of the community, the butcher, to ask him if he knew where I could get a horse. As luck would have it, he did know of one, eight miles out on the Skims.

The next day I borrowed a rig and drove out through the sand lands, where only jack-pines and thin grass whiskers grew, over a road that twisted about itself until I was almost lost several times.

At length, however, away back in the woods, I came upon a log cabin, outside of which were three or four children, barefooted, although the snow still lay on the ground in patches. I hitched my horse and went inside the two-room shack. It was pretty bare inside; there were cracks in the hewn plank floor, and the family was evidently economizing, for there was no fire in the stove when I entered; but they soon started one and got it to blazing cheerfully. Then I broached the subject of the horse.

The man said, "We have no horse to sell."

The woman said, "We have a horse to sell."

Some of the children stood with the mother, some with the father; so I sat down to a council of war.

"You know," said the man, "we need that horse in the spring."

"But," protested the woman, "look at our family. The price for the horse would buy two cows."

"Then you 'll have to hitch the cows in with the old mare in the spring plowing," said the man.

At this point, however, the woman clinched her argument by reminding the husband that she possessed a scrap of paper saying that the horse in question belonged to her; and so it was decided under protest to sell me the horse.

They brought him up in front of the house, from the snow-covered field, where he had been pawing to get at the dead grass, and said, "This is Cid." I never knew the exact spelling or derivation of this name, but took it for granted; and afterward my wife and I translated it into The Cid.

When The Cid was led up to the front of the cabin for inspection, he could not have been said really to walk. He lounged up. His head hung away down, not to miss any stray piece of forage, I suspect. Every muscle in his body sagged and moped. The original starch had gone from his dejected ears. He weighed about eleven hundred pounds, but any one not knowing how long his hair, or, strictly speaking, his fur, was, would have said he weighed more. I never saw anything in still life so much like a cartoon after a Democratic defeat as The Cid.

I jumped into the rig and whipped up to get out of sight before the warring family changed its mind, lead-

ing The Cid behind; but the first step almost dislocated my arm. I had driven the eight miles out through the deep sand in two hours, but it took the whole afternoon to get home. Evidently The Cid had only one gait. He was what you might call a self-sufficing horse. He had been out there so long digging for his own living, exploring the land for food in summer and winter, looking out for rattlesnakes and fighting them, keeping shy of swamp-holes and peat-bogs, that he had grown very deliberate and independent in his ways.

No, that horse would not trot. It did n't do a bit of good to whip him. He could n't feel it through his coarse thick skin and fur coat, and, besides, he had n't a nerve in his body. But The Cid was land wise and just naturally took to logging. Why, that horse was a log artist and could pile logs like an elephant. I had got a log chain from my friend, Montgomery Ward, the mail-order man. I made a sled out of ash poles and scrub-oak pins, and The Cid would load up the sled with ash logs and draw them to the house for fire-wood with never a flinch, whatever the going. One day, in plowing, I disobeyed The Cid's deliberate pause. The horse knew he was approaching the danger-point of a hidden pine-stump root; at my blind and foolish urging ahead he went, but it broke the plow beam. After that, I always relied on The Cid's instincts, for he was Skims-educated from his eyelashes to his toe-nails.

We tried to use The Cid for a carriage-horse. You should hear my wife tell about that! We had to give it up, and about all the road traveling The Cid did with us was when I drove him every day to and from the

clearings. On this daily drive we passed through a deserted lumber town, with tumble-down, empty houses, crumbling walls, and weed-grown streets. The only live spot in the place was the little Skims school-house that stood in the midst of the common. This plot of land, however, held more sweet grass and clover than all my farm together. And The Cid had evidently taken note of this fact.

One noon, when as usual I had unharnessed The Cid before beginning to eat my lunch, I looked up, expecting to see him gingerly nibbling the coarse saw-edged grass in his customary way, and found to my surprise that the old fellow was gone. I got up and looked across the field, and there was The Cid going along at a rather rapid walk. As he got nearer the log fence I 'd built around the clearing his gait increased, and he went right over that fence with a nimbleness that was surprising in a horse of his nature.

Then as he skirted the ridge he broke into a gallop, and soon he was floating along at a pace that was fairly Arabian. I could hardly believe my eyes. The starch had come back into his ears, his muscles worked fast and strong, his head was flung high, and his long tail rose like the decoration of a plumed knight.

It was a surprise, but a rather sorry one. Here was The Cid disappearing over the hill, I knew not where. I must not worry nor overwork, for these are against the rules of sleep. Fame, money, success, were nothing. Only sleep was of importance. But still I needed that horse, and so I had to go after him.

I started out, not knowing how far I 'd have to go,

but finally after plodding in the sand half an hour, I came to the deserted village, and there, over in the common by the school-house, I spied The Cid chewing briskly at that good sweet grass with an energy and enthusiasm I had never suspected in him. Then he caught sight of me, and his whole aspect changed. The starch went out of his ears, his head dropped, and his whole body became limp; again he was The Cid, the Skims log-horse. He surrendered as I went up to him, acknowledging my superiority. I got on his back, and he moped drearily to the wagon; and when we got there it was time to go home.

This sort of *Wanderlust* happened again and again until I realized I had to deal with a dual nature if not with a new being. For the space of a few rare moments, at regular intervals, The Cid would reveal bewildering possibilities. When the master idea took possession of him it made him over. In these later years when I think of The Cid it is as a striking symbol of the unrevealed capacities of the undeveloped land-worker, the sturdy, dependable, plodding farmer.

3

The Old Woman, the Clay Pipe, and the Wheelbarrow

It was a funny thing how I got to know her. I was driving down along the Skims road one day when I suddenly caught a glimpse through the jack-pines of a slouch-hat and a man's coat. The next time was late

at night along by the row of white birches just the other side of the swamp. This time I caught sight of the man's coat, the slouch-hat, and the wheel of a wheelbarrow. Several days went by before I had any sight of the slouch-hat, the man's coat, and the wheelbarrow again; but one morning, disappearing through the swamp oaks, I got another fleeting look, and this time I saw a whiff of smoke from a pipe. That same night I saw the wheelbarrow again, and this time I spied a swishing feminine skirt. So I came to know the Old Woman of the Clay Pipe and the Wheelbarrow. I often caught sight of her after that, but she never seemed to have anything in her mysterious wheelbarrow; and, curiously enough, I always saw her going and never saw her come back.

I was destined, however, to meet the Old Woman with the Clay Pipe and the Wheelbarrow face to face. One noon, when I was out on the Skims, down under the wagon eating my lunch, while The Cid, with his harness all off, was browsing around on sand-bur grass, with no signs of getting an idea, suddenly I heard sounding out in the direction of one of the land-locked lakes a *whack, whack, whack!* I straightened up and listened. This sudden interruption of the Skims stillness reminded me of the old days at the Academy when I slept on my elbow and was continually awakened by unusual sounds. Up to that time, so far as I knew, nobody had ever walked on my land since I had taken possession, but here was undeniably an intruding noise. It was no team that made that desolate, oft-repeated *thump-thump,* and it could n't have been a woodpecker. It was the noise of

a hundred industrious woodpeckers all working in unison.

I stopped chewing so as not to obscure the noise. Sure enough, it was from the dead lake direction, coming up distinctly and clearly, *thwack, thwack!* I could n't stand it; I had to know what the noise was. With curiosity burning within me, I hastily finished my lunch, and, leaving The Cid to carry out any ideas he chose, I walked toward the upland, over the log fence, over the table-land, through oak scrubs by one dead lake, up the sand slopes to a little sand cañon, the whacks growing sharper at every step, so that I was sure I was headed right.

Pretty soon I came in sight of a pile of four-foot stubs, with sawed-off ends, half a cord or so right there in the midst of my farm. I went around the wood-pile. There was the Old Woman with the Clay Pipe and the Wheelbarrow, with an ax in her hand, chopping down one of those pine stubs. *Whack!* Pretty soon she saw me and stopped. I came up and said to her with a good deal of severity, "Don't you know that I own this land?"

"No," said she.

"I do," said I, firmly.

She gave me a rather curious glance, and said, "I 've cut wood here for twenty year."

"Do you have to do this?" I inquired.

"Nobody to do it for me," she said, shortly.

"How 's that?" I asked.

"Well," said she, screwing her eyes up as though she

were trying to look back into the years, "it was different when my boy Jim lived at home."

"Where is your home?" I asked.

"Up in the old lumber town," she answered. "Me and my boy Jim moved in there in the big lumber days."

"Where 's Jim now?" I asked.

"Don' know," said she, hacking away at the stub in an embarrassed fashion. "Don' know. He left right after the timber was cut down around here looking for another job. He ain't never come back, Jim ain't."

"Have n't you heard from him, either?" I inquired.

"No," said she, getting out her pipe, "no, Jim ain't no hand to write."

"Why do you suppose he did n't come back?" I continued inquisitively.

"Oh, I 'm expectin' him home any day. He always was a great hand for home," she said, puffing away at her pipe. "It was different when Jim was home. I did n't have to hunt my own wood then. But I 've been a-cutting it here now for twenty year."

Well, there was n't much that I could do or say after that. It was a rather awkward situation. The Old Woman with the Clay Pipe and the Wheelbarrow was n't begging; she 'd been cutting here "twenty year" and naturally felt perfectly at home. And I could n't be harsh with her, for the Old Woman with the Clay Pipe and the Wheelbarrow had been transmuted for me into the mother of Jim, Jim whom she expected home "any day."

So I stammered and cleared my throat. "You keep

right on cutting here," I said to her. "Any of these stubs you want you can have."

Then I went back to The Cid and the clearing, the mystery solved. I used to see her quite often after that, either out on the Skims with her wheelbarrow, or up around her old ramshackle house in the deserted log village. She seemed to take quite a bit of pride in trying to fix up the tumble-down old shack, and she never gave up the idea that her boy Jim might possibly drop in on her any day. But of course he never did. Of course not. Of course not. But possibly, just possibly, he may have. He may have. He may have.

4

The W'hay Boy

Johnny the W'hay Boy never deserted his home, never ran away and left his mother waiting for him twenty years, but he was n't a son of whom you 'd expect his mother to be very proud. I had heard Johnny a good while before I actually saw him coming out of the pines cracking his long-lashed whip and giving his weird cry of "W'hay there!" in his high crackly voice.

When I first caught sight of him, I concluded he must be a boy of about twelve, for he was short and undersized; but when I got a closer view, saw the large head set on the scrawny, narrow-shouldered body, realized that his eyes were red and bleary, and his hair gray, I knew that this old slouch-hat and flapping man-sized clothes covered an oldish chap of fifty.

Johnny the W'hay Boy was simple-minded; his tastes were extremely primitive, and his language was limited almost entirely to the loud "W'hay there!" with which he addressed his special charges, the cows. About a dozen of the villagers paid Johnny twenty cents apiece a week to take their cows out to the Skims commons and bring them in again at nightfall. So early each morning Johnny the W'hay Boy would strut like a pouter-pigeon through the little village, gathering in the cows, after the fashion of the European goose-tender, all the while snapping this great whip-lash of his, which must have been at least ten feet long. I don't suppose he ever touched a cow with it, but it gave him a feeling of superiority to have it, and he took great pride in this peculiar accomplishment of his.

The cows were to Johnny the W'hay Boy what his dog is to any Rip Van Winkle. Take away Rip's dog, and you deprive him of his last shred of self-esteem; take away Johnny the W'hay Boy's cows, and you have crushed his personality. He was brusque to them; that was simply his manner. But he always looked after them fondly.

Johnny's solicitude for his charges was matched only by the care bestowed by his mother on Johnny himself. Before I knew that Johnny and his mother lived in the little wood-colored cottage at the edge of the village, right next to the Skims, I used to notice in the yard at the back a great pile of wood débris, knots from rotting pine logs, pitchy little pine stumps that could be pried out of the ground, slabs hacked from the resinous part

of big stumps, occasional black-end stubs, all in one conglomerate mass as high as the house itself.

"My," I said, "what a great pile of wood! I wonder who built it?"

And one day, when I was on my way up from the Skims, I found out. Just off the sands I saw a two-wheeled cart with a box filled with the forage wood, old pine pieces, and occasional oak boughs. In the thills of this queer wagon, leaning hard against an old leather strap connecting the thill ends, stood Johnny the W'hay Boy, never saying a word, but tugging away, dragging the cart through the deep sand. That was surprising enough, but when I saw, with both hands on one side of the thills, a white-haired, bent, and shriveled woman of eighty and more, who I knew must be Johnny's mother, pulling with tragic earnestness, I was fairly dumb with astonishment.

After this I could n't resist the temptation of taking Johnny with me out to my farm, where we could load up old Cid's wagon with enough wood to help them out a good bit with their winter's fuel supply. Johnny's mother, keeping alive for her boy, dependent on him, yet looking out for him, waiting up for him on the nights when the cows strayed far into the swamps, fearing, worrying—for to her he was always "the boy"—encouraging him in his regular duty to the village, believed him to be as necessary to the town's welfare as the butcher. Only a Skims W'hay Boy to be sure; but what 's it to be a Skims butcher? Or the teller of the tale, for that matter?

5

Playing the One-Man Saw

It was not a big boast to say that we lived in the best house in the Skims village.

Well, right across the road from us was a poor old-tumble-down shed of a house where nothing but bats and spiders lived. Grass grew up through the cracks in the walk leading to the house, weeds filled the front yard, and bramble-roses were even growing out from the old window-ledges.

You 'd think nobody would ever want to occupy such a woebegone, rickety shanty; but one day a family moved into this house. They had very little furniture, so that it did n't take them long to move, and before they had been there a week they had a great pile of dried ash-trees from the swamps hauled up in front of the house. And presently we saw the Man of the One-Man Saw.

He was four years old, that Man, doing his day's work. Early one morning we heard a queer kind of wiggling and scraping going on outside, and on looking out to investigate we were met with the sight of this infant sawing wood with what I knew for a one-man saw, as I had one from the mail-order house just like it. Some one had put one of these long burnt-off ash-trees up on two improvised horses, with the ends loose, marked out for the One Man, and here he was, soberly sawing, inch by inch, all quiet by himself.

Hour by hour the little fellow kept at it, day by day, chewing away at the ash logs with the one-man saw. It seemed to be his play, his work, his hobby, his life. He never smiled; once in a while he sang a tuneless little song to himself or gave soft little grunts, but that was all, as he kept right on sawing wood.

Finally the thing got on my wife's nerves, and she had to go over to the house across the road and investigate labor conditions. "Why," she said, "here we have child labor and the sweat-shop and the slums right here at our very door, miles from the sound of any city. It 's terrible. I must see what sort of mother that child has."

She made her visit—her Skims' settlement work call, perhaps you 'd name it—and came back with a strange tale.

"That woman, the mother of the One Man, is the daughter of the Blind Man with the Blind Horse."

"What?" I exclaimed.

"It 's true," vowed my wife, grimly.

I could hardly believe it, for it did n't seem possible that such a forlorn and utterly useless person as the Blind Man with the Blind Horse could have the temerity to make himself responsible for bringing other beings into this hard world. I had seen the old man on my way to the onion-bed. He was truly the derelict of derelicts.

The first time I had met him was just outside the village, and he had asked me how far he was from town. It seemed he had a certain sensitiveness to light and could make out whether objects were near or far

off, but beyond that the world of light was a blank to him. And then to think of his having a blind horse! There he was, poor sightless beast, hitched to this rickety old wagon with a harness mended and patched all over with bits of hay-wire, a literal case of the blind leading the blind. Any merciful man with eyes would have brought the ancient nag to the end of his days ten years before. He had no teeth, so that he could n't eat much, and he was gaunt and gray with years; but his master could n't see him. He could feel him, to be sure, and called my attention to him rather proudly.

"So this is your horse?" I asked. And do you know that beast seemed to feel the compliment. I suppose he thought nobody would take him for a real horse, and he rather brightened up and pricked up his ears, standing here at attention, as if saying to himself, "After all, I am a horse."

Other encounters got me better acquainted with the Blind Man with the Blind Horse, and I learned where and how he lived. Their home was an old abandoned log house out on the sand road, and a more dismal dwelling you could hardly hope to find. There was not a spear of grass in their front lawn, just shifting sand running down to the peat-bogs below. Back of the house was what pretended to be a garden, and there a few struggling pieces of corn and several thin potato-vines were fighting hard, just like the people of the Skims, for an existence in the sands.

Right down in the peat-bogs, however, where the black edges of the muck ran up against the sand-knoll, they had managed to start a little bed of onions and lettuce.

This was all they had, except the Skims commons, where the cow and the blind horse might get a scanty living from saw-toothed grass, and perhaps a few spears of precious blue-joint now and then.

When my wife went over that day she got the story of the blind derelict's daughter.

Beyond the sand-knoll where the old squatter's house stood, out of the cedar-swamp, came the only source of cash for the sand land squatters: railroad ties that brought twenty-five cents apiece.

And when the Blind Man's daughter was thirteen, she said, she had learned to go out into the swamp mire to dig the sunken cedars and oaks lying half buried in muck and water. First, she had been obliged to measure the log, for you know railroad ties have to be of regulation length and size; then she placed the saw for her blind father, and down in the bogs the two of them sawed away at the ends. Then came the hardest part: she had to trim the logs and drag them, heavy and water-soaked as they were, out of the swamp and up the sand-hill above. All through her girlhood this cruel labor kept up, with the bitterness of wasted hauling and pulling from carrying logs that proved too thick at one end or otherwise unsatisfactory. In the two years when she was thirteen and fourteen, she said, they took out fifteen hundred ties from the swamp.

The climax came, she said, one time when she had to drag out a particularly big tie. She could barely lift it, but under the threats of her father she managed to lug it along over her shoulder. She staggered with the dripping, slippery, slimy thing that would have been a

load for a full-grown man, stepping from log to log, and bog to bog, dropping it a dozen times or more, vowing she could n't go on. But under her father's curses and threats to kill her, she picked it up again each time, and finally pulled it to the sand.

After that, she resolved to escape, and when she was not more than sixteen she married the first man who came along and so entered upon a new series of tragedies. She had jumped from the frying-pan into the fire, for her husband was a loafer and a derelict, too, living about in the old deserted houses of the Skims, getting the barest living possible. Here she was, settled on a foundation of deficit in every respect, a derelict past behind her, a derelict future before her, and the One Man, who did n't know the meaning of play.

She had toiled fiercely all her life, and her worldly property was almost nil. She had a table, a chair, an old stove, a bed; that was about all.

My wife just could n't find it in her heart to speak to her about the One Man. Poor girl-wife, she never knew what play was herself; how should she be expected to teach him? The children of the Skims must play a game of chance in being born, fortunate to have a one-man saw to pull and push.

6

He Never Squealed

It was through the onion-bed that I got to know Friday. You see I had n't been out on the Skims

long before I began to read up on onions in the Washington bulletins and in seed catalogues. I 'd been led to believe through these catalogues that from a small patch of land one could very soon raise enough money to become independently rich. The only competitor, I learned, was the chicken business, which, the bird fanciers induced me to believe, would be quicker.

Any patch of land, my catalogues said, would grow two hundred bushels of onions to the acre; but if it were fairly well tended, it could be made five hundred; if unusual care were taken, with ordinary good luck in weather, the crop would increase to a thousand bushels to the acre.

Then one could store them until midwinter or late spring and sell them for from one to two dollars a bushel. It was plain enough how one could become rich. Naturally, the problem of storage would hardly arise before I had grown the crop, and so I gave that little thought but directed all my energies toward finding a suitable onion ground.

In the back of my mind, of course, I knew it was ridiculous to look for onion soil out here on the sands. Still, I reasoned, all the great deeds of the earth had been accomplished by attempting the impossible, and so why should I hesitate? I went out and looked. I came to the dry upland soil and eliminated it; I went down into the swale with its cattails and counted that out of my prospects. Then I went to the ridge overhanging the brook that was big enough to be called a river. I looked down, and there I saw the wide edges of the stream filled

in with one mass of broken and tangled dead-brown goldenrod.

"Here," I said, "is my onion soil!" I rushed down into the midst of the thickly interwoven mass with my hoe, turned up the soil, and found it a fine black alluvial mixture; five-hundred-bushel onion acre land without doubt! Up and down the bank I rushed, computing the number of possible inches I could set out into onions. Before I started home that night I was a rich man; rich enough, almost, to buy back the precious boon of sleep.

The next morning, bright and early, I had my old horse The Cid down with a plow, digging into the goldenrod bed. We began with light hearts, for we knew not with what we had to contend. There was a leather covering of goldenrod roots an inch thick, forming a regular rhinoceros-hide blanket all over the fine black onion soil.

Well, old Cid and I went on plowing, ripping up that leather hide, until we had it all cut in strips, like the fringe of a deerskin Indian robe. I stopped The Cid and took a survey of the goldenrod bed, all ruthlessly cut up, and wondered about my onions. For one thing, I decided The Cid was of no more use for the time, and so I loosed him to wander and feed on dead grass and returned to the scene of action with a pitchfork.

Then for days I pitchforked the leather roots off the land, keeping at it so long that I got to be quite philosophical. "This is mighty fortunate," I said, "having this goldenrod here. I 'll just heap all this leather up

and make a regular Dutch dike of it, so the river won't come over." Accordingly I worked day after day, pitchforking and banking and raking, until there was n't a twig or a root left; not an indication of what had been. And it was the finest soil you ever saw, like meal! I 'd take it up in my hand and wish that it were spread out all over my two forties.

It was so workable that I easily got it into condition for my onion-bed. I had sent to the seed house and got that peculiar variety guaranteed to grow a thousand bushels to the acre, several pounds of seed in all, I believe. Then I made a marker out of ash and sowed every bit of that seed by hand on that half-acre, more or less. For a man who must n't overwork, bending down over one of those little furrows, dribbling the small seeds out between thumb and finger one by one, back and forth across the plot, days and days, was quite a task.

However, all the sowing and careful covering were as nothing beside the satisfaction I had of thinking that away back there on the Skims, where one would least expect it, I had found an onion gold-mine whose profits were sure to be enormous. I could hardly wait for the onions to come up. My wife and I would go down and stand on the ridge above the river, looking below on the fine black onion soil winding around the bend in the river, peering for the sight of the first green tops and dreaming of the wealth to come.

Finally they began to come up, and when we could see the clean green rows we felt that our seed was good and our bushels to the acre assured. When the onions

were up four inches high, however, there came a steady downpour of rain for three days. Then it took a day off and started in again. By and by it occurred to me to wonder how my onion-bed was getting on. So I drove The Cid down to the bridge to have a look, and there the rain had pooled, and the swollen brook river had seeped in through my leather dike, until every one of the dollar-a-bushel onions was under water. The bright green rows of young things looked up at me from the bottom of the pools, and I had my first taste of defeat as a farmer.

I went home with a sad tale of disaster, and was not to be comforted until the rain stopped and the flood subsided, and the green shoots. a little jaundiced, began to emerge. Hope came on again, and in the end two thirds of my onions came safe through the storm. Then followed a season of hot sultry weather, and another big surprise, awaiting me, came to pass.

Among my onions suddenly appeared everywhere fuzzy green stuff, the tiny goldenrods. I had neglected to take into account a hundred years of goldenrod seeds. As a result in a few days my onions were so overtopped that I could n't see them at all, and I knew that the time of weeding had come. I started in bravely. I was still on my first row when right near me I heard an ominous "*Buzz-zz!*" and there by my feet was a monster rattler, the first one I 'd ever seen or heard; and now, added to my terrors by night, was the buzz of the rattler, for which I prepared by sharpening hoes at intervals all night long. I never moved about the Skims after that without having my ear sharply attuned for the rattle of

warning, and never without carrying my hoe filed to a razor edge.

But I went on my lonesome way, weeding and pulling row after row, with the weeds growing faster all the time, so that I could n't keep up, and I saw my thousand dwindle to eight hundred and then to four hundred and almost out of sight, until I found my man Friday.

The first day I saw Friday he was fishing. He was about the oddest-looking dried-up little mortal I had ever seen, sitting up there on the high bridge in his old patched clothes, layer on layer of patches, stratum on stratum; you might even have called them geological garments, such was their stratified variety.

"Catching trout?" I called to him.

"No," said he, showing me a basket of little fishes about four inches long.

"Pretty discouraging, fishing for such small fry, is n't it?" I asked.

He looked up at me in a puzzled fashion and then made a speech short but very full of meaning, "Oh, dat 's all right!"

"Where do you live?" I asked.

"Up in the corner," and he pointed with his thumb back to the deserted village in which there were only two wooden shelters standing.

An idea occurred to me suddenly. "How would you like to work on shares in this onion-bed with me?" I asked.

He looked up interested.

"I 'll give you a third of all we harvest," I offered, longing for company and partnership.

To my delight, Friday agreed to this proposition, and so, after he had put up his fish and pole, he got into the wagon with me and went down to see the onion-bed. He did n't say much, but I could see that he was very much pleased with the onions and delighted to be able to help.

It was Friday when I found him; so in Crusoe fashion I called him my Man Friday. Early on Saturday morning he was on hand to weed, and every morning when I arrived at eight he was there with his little basket, busily weeding. That basket was one mystery about Friday I never solved. I never saw him take anything out of it nor yet put anything in, but it was always with him.

But after a while Friday did n't get down to the onion-patch so early, and I 'd stop for him as I drove down. As I sat there in my wagon waiting for him mornings, I began to notice what was going on around his shanty. Sometimes I 'd find him out tending his garden, made up of two small potato-patches, one under the side window and the other out in front where a flower-garden would naturally have been placed. At other times I saw Friday out with a scythe, and I noticed a little stack of hay, about six feet in diameter, out in his yard. Once, when I discovered him coming up over the hill, a bundle of hay tied around with a piece of hay-wire and slung over his back, I questioned him.

"Oh, yes," he said, "cut a little hay by the river."

Day by day this stack of Friday's grew until it was nicely rounded, and then one day it disappeared. Fri-

day had sold it, but he straightway grew another, carefully garnering every blade of grass from the peat-bogs and river bottoms. And he worked just as hard to get his fuel, for the wood had been cleared off for half a mile around the town. The Old Woman with the Clay Pipe and the Wheelbarrow had seen to that, and Friday had no cart; so I 'd see him some mornings come up from the swamps with a stub over his shoulder.

"Pretty hard work, is n't it?" I asked.

"Oh, dat 's all right," said he.

Then when I 'd question him he 'd tell me about Finland. Finland and the onions were the only two subjects he would ever brighten up about. He told me of the midnight sun and the northern lights. He described the beautiful fields of oats and grass, and explained how the women of Finland gather into bundles the tender branches of bush and tree, that in the winter they may soften them with soaking and feed as fodder for their cattle.

No, Friday never smiled. He seemed to have forgotten how. His face, a grim yellow leather stoic mask with sunken curves, never lighted up with any thrill at all. I wondered what had ever happened to the man to make him like this, and on inquiry discovered that he had lumbered on the Skims in its rollicking days when the lumber boom was on. Now he had no acquaintances at all, except a few old lumber men, one of whom kept a saloon up in the town proper. Not a friend in America, relatives all in far-off Finland, and he a stranded derelict alone here living on little fishes—enough to make

any man despair. But not so Friday. He was pure grit.

"Good morning," I 'd say. "How are you?"

"Oh, dat 's all right," he would answer.

Then one morning I added my favorite question, "How do you sleep?"

"Don't sleep," he replied.

"What 's the matter?" said I, eagerly.

"Oh," he said, "I 've got hell right here," and poor Friday laid his hand on the pit of his stomach.

I became interested, for sleep was the burning question in life to me. "Don't you sleep any?" I inquired.

"Well, not much. Walk around the room hour after hour all night mostly."

After this each morning I greeted him with the inquiry so often put by my friends to me, "Well, how 'd you sleep?"

"Walked till three o'clock," he 'd say. He did n't know what was the matter with him. All he knew was that he had hell in him.

He did n't talk much and never complained, but I figured it out that he had been a hard drinker when he was a lumberman, and that probably the stuff had eaten the lining out of his stomach. So here he was living on little minnows and hanging on for dear life.

Back and forth to the onion-patch, Friday and I went, until it became evident that Friday was going less and less each day. But even with his hell burning on worse than ever his spirit was right up tight; he was going to see the thing through. I was deeply touched

by Friday's Finnish pluck. Here was a man, a fellow-traveler in life, almost duplicating my own experience. He was doing the thing that was more than I was doing. He was a derelict lumberman, stranded. The wealthy man who had exploited the land was giving statues to his city; the saloon man who had fed Friday the whisky had friends—he could intoxicate himself on friendship; but here was Friday, alone and friendless, standing in the last old lumber-shack, fighting single-handed a losing fight.

What could I have done in a position like that, crawling up the ridge with an old stub to keep me warm, gathering hay, straw by straw? Here was I with my wife, my family, my friends, all standing by me, and I was not doing half so well, not putting up half the fight. Yes, indeed, Friday had a right to my sympathy, if ever a man had, and I 'd have done more for him, but I could n't trust my own miserable strength.

But the time came, at length, when we gathered in the onion crop and shared it. We had had to give up half the plot as hopelessly weedy, but the other half had brought forth some fine onions. I remember well our pride as we harvested them and took up Friday's two big loads to his house and put them in a great pile on the floor in his bare room. For miles around, the people had grown to call me the Onion Man, but I cared little for this taint on my name, as I looked that day at the great onion pile and Friday's face, as he said, almost pleased, for once, "Oh, dat 's all right."

From that time on, Friday did n't work for me, but as I drove by his shanty I was always anxious to see

some indication that he was up and around, and if I did n't see the scythe out, or his bait can or hoe, I always stopped in a moment to inquire about the sleep.

But in spite of my hopes, things were steadily going from bad to worse with Friday. It came Christmas-time, and my wife put up a basket for me to take to him, with oysters and one thing and another. He was n't around outside the house when I went into the yard, and as the door was open, I went in. I 've seen dirtier places than Friday's bare house, but never in all my life have I seen as wretched a spot. It was absolutely barren. An old Finnish Bible was the only evidence of better days. Friday was sitting on a bed covered with some sort of sheepskin or hide; not a vestige of real bedclothes was to be seen.

"Merry Christmas!" I said. "How are you?"

"Oh, dat 's all right," he slowly replied.

I looked around. "But you have hardly enough wood to last you a week!" I said.

"Oh, dat 's all right."

I made a little fire, and then I showed him the things I 'd brought. He seemed pleased. While I was there, the saloon-keeper from town came in. He tried to be a little jocular but did n't succeed, for when he mentioned whisky Friday merely shook his head and said he did n't take it any more. It was evident that Friday was on his last legs. I spoke with the saloon-keeper outside Friday's door a moment when we had started to leave.

"The man," he said, "is simply dying there. He can't get out for more wood."

I was forced to agree that he was right. And there

was nothing I could do for him. So on Christmas day we made arrangements for a sleigh to come and take Friday to the county house. Just as soon as things came easy, and he no longer had to carry limbs and stubs for a fire, his motive in life was taken away, and so he drooped, and light left his eyes.

When he realized that we understood, he said: "Oh, dat 's all right. I never squealed."

No one will ever make me think that Friday lived in vain. He certainly was an unaccountable fleck of cream floating on the Skims.

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